BING

DECEMBER 1990

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THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

Founded 1950

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Australia	£11.50 per annum

All remittances should be paid in £ sterling, payable to "Michael Crampton — ICC" with the exception of U.S. members who should send their remittance in U.S. dollars to F. Wiggins whose address is shown on page 1.
All articles for inclusion in the magazine should be sent to Ken Crossland.
Readers' letters and material for inclusion in Trading Post should be sent to Malcolm Macfarlane.
Any other correspondence concerning membership or other aspects of club affairs should be sent to Michael Crampton.
Cover photograph courtesy of Tony Carpenter.

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Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the ICC. All original material © ICC 1990.

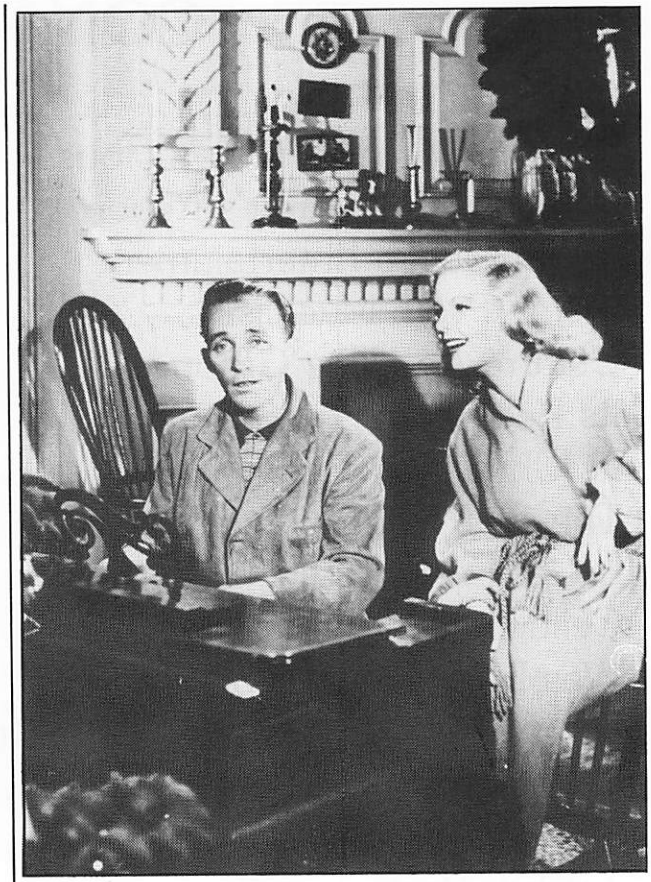
EDITORIAL

"Editor speak with forked tongue!" Well nobody actually used those words, but they sum up the gist of many of the letters received since BING 95 hit your doormats back in August. "How can it be" they said, "that the editor says that he has been forced by pressures of space to leave things out, when there are so many blank spaces?"

Now the issue of just how many blank spaces and what column footage they represented is something which could occupy us for some time. Some correspondents provided guess-timates that "around two pages" had been lost. Others were more cautious, referring to at least a page, although one writer,who is to be admired for his attention to detail if nothing else, claimed to have measured them and that they amounted to "3½ pages".

All of which goes to prove that the compilation of a magazine, even in the days of the computer and the word-processor, remains an art and not a precise science. But joking aside, some explanation is called for. The magazine starts as a series of articles written by various contributors and sent to me. Most are already typed and require only some "linking" from me. Some handwritten articles are re-typed, only because this has been shown to make the proof-reading (of which more in a moment) that much easier. I assemble all of this, put it into an order of sorts, think about how it will be illustrated and send it off to the printer.

Aroundabout three weeks later, the dreaded "galleys" arrive. These represent the magazine in its pre-birth form. The difficulty with them is twofold. Firstly they have only one start and one end — the start being page 1 and the end being page 32, with no milestones of any form in between; second, they are printed in the left hand column only — thus doubling the equivalent page length to 64 pages. The task which faces yours truly, Malcolm Macfarlane, and any one else who can be press-ganged into service is not only to find the spelling and typing mistakes some of which inevitably slip through — Renee Chester lives at 53 Park Crescent not 35 (our apologies, not only to Renee but also to the good people at 35), but to try and work out where the pages will fall. At this stage of course, there are no photographs, so allowance has to be made for them too, together with the impact of printing in two columns, rather than one. Its rather like my other hobby, golf, in that the wonder is not that we occasionally get it wrong, but that anybody ever gets it right, even once! One solution would of course be to stand over the printer when the thing is finally put to bed, but with the printing handled 300 miles away, that



is easier said than done. We can but try; BING 94 ran to 34 pages, adding 6p to the postage on each envelope; BING 95 could have been handled with 28½ if our sternest critic is to be believed. Any member whose instinct by now is to reach for the slide rule ahead of their reading glasses will already know how BING 96 has fared.

I hope that the marks for artistic impression will be good because I'm certain that those for technical content will be. We have our usual array of regulars plus John Marshall's "Variety" pages, an excellent, dare I say highbrow contribution from Father Michael Collins of Florida, some first hand research deep in the bowels of the BBC by Malcolm Macfarlane, and so it goes on. Peruse at your leisure — oh, and just in case space precludes elsewhere, a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to one and all.

Ken Crossland

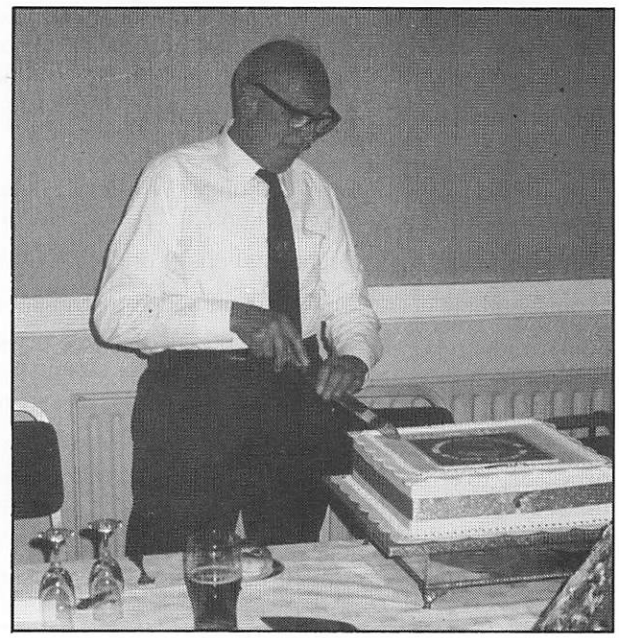
Let's All Meet At Mike's House

At least that's the way it was 25 years ago. In celebration of that event, and the 40th anniversary of the foundation of the British Bing Club — of which the ICC is a direct descendant — 85 of our current membership gathered in Leeds on 7 October. The venue, as has been the practice since the mid 70s was the Mansion Hotel in Roundhay Park, and again in keeping with tradition, we were blessed with a pleasant early autumn day.

It seems fitting that Michael Crampton should be the organiser, having taken over the secretarial reins of the club itself. Mike's organisational powers were tested to the limit, first by the nmumber of atendees — the highest for 10 years or so, which surely is a good sign — and second by the presence of a shoe-fair in the hotel, which barred our entry to our function room until an hour before the start. Nevertheless, the tones of "Where The Blue Of The Night" introduced the meeting shortly after 3 p.m. and one of Mike's first tasks was a double presentation — to Leslie Gaylor, present as one of the founding members of the original club in 1950 , and to Arnold Pope of Manchester, who apart from Mike himself, was the only member present who was also there in 1965 when the Leeds meetings began. Arnold is now the regular "setter of quizes" and has the uncanny knack of combining delightfully selected recordings from Bing's golden Thirties days with extremely difficult questions!

The double anniversary was celebrated in other ways. John Joyce masterminded the production of a souvenir brochure with contributions from Ken Barnes, Leslie Gaylor, Fred Reynolds, Ralph Harding and yours truly. The highlight though was undoubtedly the special cake made for us by Sandra Chester, daughter of Renee. The cake was the subject of picture taking, a quiz to guess the weight (thirty odd pounds forsooth) and finally a ceremonial cutting by Leslie Gaylor. Our thanks go to Sandra.

On audio tape, we heard the voice of Reg Bristo in his last message to the ICC recorded a few weeks before his death, together with plenty of music for those rare moments when the conversation dropped. Jim Reilly



Leslie Gaylor cuts the cake

produced a terrific video compilation, including the rare sight of Bing on "Top Of The Pops" in 1975. Malcolm Macfarlane also produced a video quiz, which owed almost as much to Sherlock Holmes as to Bing Crosby. Books and records were widely sold, particularly those offered at give-away prices by Don and Peter Haizelden — although it has to be said that there was even greater interest in the things they definitely were *not* selling, including a beautifully framed selection of Bing in American magzine advertisements. We hope to prevail on Don and Peter to get some of these into future issues of the magazine.

Doubtless some would have happily stayed all night, but when the curtain came down around 10.30 p.m., yet another warm and happy memory had been created in the history of the International Crosby Circle.

Ken Crossland.

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

Thrice happy and thrice un-happy is the person who has to say something new and interesting about the life and times of Bing Crosby and this, dear reader, is how I feel as I contemplate writing your December report. But then my thoughts go back to just a year ago when we became aware that our esteemed secretary could no longer contemplate running the ICC and almost before we could begin to digest the significance of his decision, the Great Reaper came a calling. Reg continues to be missed for his wit, humaneness, erudition and his vast written testimony to his love of matters Crosby. All of which leads me to reflect on this first year under the direction of the new team.

The questionnaire gives a clue to how members judge us so far and in my humble opinion the team have a great deal to be proud of. Given continued enthusiastic support from members we can accomplish great things in the future.

Leeds 1990 has come and gone but thankfully we can catch the flavour of events by reading Ken's articles in this issue of the ɔurnal. It was a proud moment for me to open my 25th meeting but even more significant was the fact that we were commemorating the 40th anniversary of the founding of the British Bing Club in March 1950. Leslie Gaylor was making his second consecutive visit to the Mansion and on this occasion he was Guest of Honour, so distinguished because he was a club founder member. It was my pleasure to present Leslie with a specially framed anniversary ticket given to show our appreciation for all his devoted work these past 40 years. We owe Leslie a

great deal. Another presentation was made to Arnold Pope for his 25th attendance at Leeds. Well done Arnold. Members can buy the beautifully designed souvenir brochure for £1.50 and this can be obtained by writing to me at the usual address. Please do send for a copy, you will be supporting the ICC funds. Finally can I pay tribute to my supporters Renee Chester (for her magnificent anniversary cake), Jim Reilly (for his wonderful video show) and John Joyce for the special ticket and brochure. Also to Ken for covering the event and last but not least may I express my appreciation to the 86 guests. It was a wonderful day.

The International Crosby Circle extends a cordial welcome to our new members who joined us in this the 1990 feastive season:

From the USA	Don Mahoney (Worcester, Massachussetts) Pete Cakanic (Chicago, Illinois)
From Canada	Bryan Stevens (London, Ontario)
From Scotland	Mr. T. Cunningham (Livingston, West Lothian)

Sadly I must report the recent deaths of two dear members and I extend to their families our sincere condolences. We are comforted to learn that Pete Jinks and Jack Rodgers derived great pleasure from their respective Bing collections, Pete lived in Birminham and Jack in Yate, Bristol.

May I remind members that it is time to renew their subscription and that new rates apply, the increase being necessary to cover extra postal costs and to take account of inflation in 1991. Your prompt renewal is requested so that costs can be kept down and payment is essential if you are to receive your April 1991 journal.

The 1990 festive season is soon to be with us and may I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a joyous Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

IT'S TIME TO RENEW FOR 1991

On the 1st of January, 1991 it is time for all members to renew their membership. PLEASE follow these directions:

TO OUR MEMBERS IN THE BRITISH ISLES AND OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Please send your cheque and postal order for £6.00 (£7 Europe) to:

Michael Crampton, ICC, 19 Carrholm Crescent, Chapel Allerton, Leeds LS7 2NL.

TO OUR MEMBERS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Please send the equivalent of £10.00 sterling (in US dollars) to:

F.B. (Wig) Wiggins, 5608 North 34th. Street, Arlington, Virginia 22207

Wig is our North American representative and he will receive "BING" in bulk from John Joyce. Wig will then mail you your copies and you should contact him with your dues and any detail of non-receipt of the magazine.

Please make out cheques to: F.B. Wiggins.

TO OUR MEMBERS IN AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND and SOUTH AMERICA

Please send the equivalent of £11.50 sterling to:

Michael Crampton, ICC, 19 Carrholm Crescent, Chapel Allerton, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS7 2NL.

Prompt payment and support for the 1991 calendar will help to ensure that any rise in subscription in 1992 will be kept to an absolute minimum.

ICC MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE — APRIL 1990

42% of our membership (205 members) responded to this our first attempt to discover what they would wish to gain by being members of the International Crosby Circle. The results are interesting and we will endeavour to meet members needs whenever we can. The great majority of respondents welcomed the 'new' team's approach and whilst this must not lead to complacency, it is encouraging that we enjoy your confidence — thus far. So here are the results and interpolation has been used to give a 'full' ICC picture.

QUESTION 2 (Year of joining ICC or predecessor club)

1950-1959	9%	1980-1989	23%
1960-1969	10%	1990-	5%
1970-1979	53%		

It is clear from reading these results that the majority of our members joined the ICC in the mid-seventies when there was a great resurgence of interest in Bing's career. This reawakening was prompted by Bing's appearance at the London Palladium and the ICC received welcome and much needed publicity on the sleeves of several new and exciting LP's produced by Ken Barnes. Publicity pays!

QUESTION 3 (Age profile of our members)

Under 45	7%
45-60	29%
Over 60	64%

This profile was predictable given Bing's place in time and the result suggests that we must try to attract younger members if the ICC is to grow and future generations of popular music lovers are to be given a chance to hear and see his great work.

QUESTION 4 (Membership of other Crosby Clubs)

Club Crosby	25%	Bingthings Society	12%
Victorian BCS	19%	Bingfriends & CS	9%
BC Historical Society	14%	Grapevine	10%

Replies to this question are difficult to summarise since many members belong to several clubs, it is however clear from the correspondence that knowledge of our associated societies is scarce. Details of membership can now be found in each issue of "BING".

QUESTION 4 (What publications would you wish the ICC to provide)

Membership file	117 requests	LP listing	121 requests
78's listing	65 requests	CD listing	123 requests

Once again it is difficult to represent the above replies accurately but we are currently meeting the need for a CD listing courtesy of Derek Parkes and Colin Pugh. We hope to provide the other information during 1991/92.

Other suggestions were:

Non-Commercial Directory	Earnestly sought by many members.
Video data	Members ask: what is available and from where can it be obtained?
Discography	Can we reprint and update the 'Road to Bing Crosby' List Canadian LP's List 45's Source of Alternate Takes List Bing Cassettes When were LP's issued? Provide details of all Spokane LP's.
TV appearances	Can we give details
Other suggestions	Included: Can we have details of Sheet Music, Books about Bing, Record reviews. Can we issue special tapes. Provide a list of Bing's place in the Top Ten. Can we devote one issue to trading our disposals and wants.

Some of the information requested above is available to us and we will be bringing this to members attention during the coming year. If any member can assist with details of the above we will be delighted to hear from them.

QUESTION 6 (Other musical interests)

Big Bands	53%	Michael Holliday	36%
Perry Como	43%	Frank Sinatra	45%
Classical Mus.	36%	Classical singers	22%
Singers 1940's	56%	Singer's 1930's	48%

This question was introduced into the questionnaire to provide members with general information about the extent of other members musical interests. I have personally been pleased to learn that there are other members who enjoy Deanna Durbin's music and I will be in contact with them to share my enthusiasm for her singing. The information provided will also be very useful when we come to compile the Members Directory.

QUESTION 7 & 8 (Club Management and any other areas of concern)

The great majority of replies expressed favourable comment on the new style of managing the affairs of the ICC and a sense of relief was conveyed that we had managed to continue "BING" and their worries were about the loss of one magazine per year, number of pages in BING and the fact that we did not interject editor comment throughout the journal. A few members (pensioners) are worried about any increased costs and they have asked if we can introduce differential payments, ie cheaper rates for pensioners. I am afraid that since approximately 70% of

our members are of pension age a reduced subscription will not be possible but every effort will be made to keep our costs down. The latest increase in subscription is to cover increased postal costs and to allow for inflation in 1991.

Other suggestions were as follows:

Advertising	Could we prevail upon other clubs to advertise ICC and in return we could publicise their activities. (Suggestions on where to advertise would be welcome). Record Centre at Birmingham and Sinatra magazine have been suggested.
Members letters	Increased space for members letters is suggested by several respondents. (We will feature as many as space allows)
Also	Could we produce "BING" binders to accommodate say 10 issues of the magazine.
	Could we publicise Bing's achievements more.
	Members would appreciate the return of Bing on the Box, they would like more information on LP's and cassettes. Information is requested on Bing's leading ladies and on Bing's child co-stars.
	Several replies suggested local ICC meetings and members would like to hear more from our US members.
	One contributor suggests we print the best from the past and that we should reproduce articles of interst from the other Crosby magazines.
	Several members have suggested that we ask people to relate their experience of meeting Bing before it is too late.
	Derek Parkes has been praised for his contribution but some members would like a more simplified feature.

And that friends brings me to the end of this first analysis of your 1990 questionnaire. We hope that we will be able to deliver some of your requirements during the coming year and I hope that members who have not returned their answers will be inspired to do so.

Michael Crampton.

Bing meets Bob Hope's cousins

Don Small has forwarded this photograph which shows Bing and Bob Hope at Shepperton Studios on August 2nd 1961. Bob Hope's father, William Henry, had a sister called Lucy. Lucy's son is Frank Symons who is standing on the back row in the photograph with Bob. The remainder of the people seen are Frank's family. Apparently Bing had the 'flu on that day. Bing eventually autographed the photograph and it seems that one of the younger members of Frank's family noticed the writing and said, "Look here, someone has written his name on the photograph and spoiled it." He then tried to rub out the writing until someone realised and stopped him in his attempt!

Frank Symons still lives in Hitchin and regularly hears from Bob Hope.

Take the Road to Entertainment . . . !

How good to see the 112 track Reader's Digest set advertised so prominently in the nation's journals — particularly that shown below, which also conveniently helps us fill a gap from the last issue when we were precluded from printing track details in Derek Parkes' newsletter. As you will see, sets are available direct from Reader's Digest, or if, like your editor you live close to a RD shop, try there.

TAKE THE ROAD TO ENTERTAINMENT WITH

BING CROSBY AND HIS FRIENDS

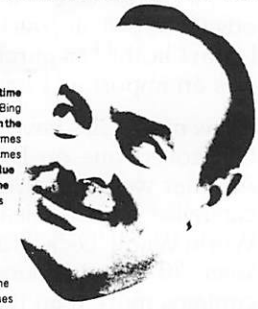
112 ORIGINAL HITS FROM A GOLDEN ERA

Everyone knows that Bing Crosby was one of the greatest and most popular singers of all time. During his heyday in the 30s, 40s and 50s, Bing's unique style changed the course of popular music-which is why we're calling our exclusive new collection 'The Bing Crosby Years'.

Bing himself sold over 400 million records and probably introduced more great songs than anybody else in history. And in this unique collection you'll hear 43 of Bing's finest performances – along with 69 other great original recordings by over 50 legendary stars.

All your favourites are here: from Fats Waller to the fabulous Ink Spots, from Judy Garland to Doris Day, from Bob Hope to Fred Astaire – more than 20 years of their best and most famous hits – all original recordings by Bing and his friends.

From the opening bars of 'Where the Blue of the Night Meets the Gold of the Day,' Bing's lifelong theme, you'll enter the magical world of 'The Bing Crosby Years' – 5½ hours of timeless music, and yours to cherish forever. Just look at this classic line up:



Great Stars – Golden Memories (1930–1935)
Where the Blue of the Night Meets the Gold of the Day Bing Crosby • **Sophisticated Lady** Duke Ellington and his Orchestra • **Night and Day** Fred Astaire • **Love Is Just Around the Corner** Bing Crosby • **Forty Second Street** The Boswell Sisters • **Please** Bing Crosby • **I'm Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter** Fats Waller • **Falling In Love Again** Marlene Dietrich • **June In January** Bing Crosby • **Some of These Days** Sophie Tucker • **Honeysuckle Rose** Fats Waller • **I've Got the World on a String** Louis Armstrong • **Miss Otis Regrets** The Mills Brothers • **Red Sails In the Sunset** Bing Crosby.

Sentimental Souvenirs (1936–1938)
Pennies from Heaven Bing Crosby • **A Fine Romance** Fred Astaire • **I Got Plenty o' Nuttin'** Bing Crosby • **Marie** Jack Leonard with Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra • **I Can't Get Started** Bunny Berigan and his Orchestra • **Sweet Leilani** Bing Crosby • **You Made Me Love You** Judy Garland • **Bei Mir Bist Du Schön** The Andrews Sisters • **Too Marvellous for Words** Bing Crosby • **Let's Call the Whole Thing Off** The Ink Spots • **The Way You Look Tonight** Bing Crosby and Dixie Lee Crosby • **When Somebody Thinks You're Wonderful** Fats Waller • **I'm an Old Cowhand** Bing Crosby • **I'm Putting All My Eggs In One Basket** The Boswell Sisters.

Relax and Remember (1938–1939)
Thanks for the Memory Bob Hope and Shirley Ross • **You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby** Bing Crosby • **Begin the Beguine** Artie Shaw and his Orchestra • **Mexicali Rose** Bing Crosby • **A-Tisket, a-Tasket** Ella Fitzgerald • **Sing, Sing, Sing (introducing Christopher Columbus)** Benny Goodman and his Orchestra • **Over the Rainbow** Judy Garland • **Sunrise Serenade** Glenn Miller and his Orchestra • **An Apple for the Teacher** Bing Crosby and Connee Boswell • **Stardust** Bing Crosby • **If I Didn't Care** The Ink Spots • **Somebody Loves Me** Bing Crosby • **Little Brown Jug** Glenn Miller and his Orchestra.

Reminiscing with the Stars (1939–1941)
Cherokee Charlie Barnet and his Orchestra • **Our Love Affair** Frank Sinatra with Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra • **A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square** Bing Crosby • **The White Cliffs of Dover** Glenn Miller and his Orchestra • **I'll Be with You In Apple Blossom Time** The Andrews Sisters • **Tonight We Love** Tony Martin • **San Antonio Rose** Bing Crosby • **Yes, My Darling Daughter** Dinah Shore • **Blueberry Hill** Glenn Miller and his Orchestra • **Whispering Grass** The Ink Spots • **That's for Me** Bing Crosby • **Amapola** Bob Eberly and Helen O'Connell with Jimmy Dorsey and his Orchestra • **Mister Meadowlark** Bing Crosby and Johnny Mercer • **I'm Nobody's Baby** Judy Garland • **Trade Winds** Bing Crosby.

As Times Go By (1942–1944)
Swinging on a Star Bing Crosby • **Dearly Beloved** Glenn Miller and his Orchestra • **San Fernando Valley** Bing Crosby • **Put Your Arms Around Me, Honey** Dick Haymes • **Moonlight Becomes You** Bing Crosby • **Paper Doll** The Mills Brothers • **Strip Polka** The Andrews Sisters • **People Will Say We're In Love** Bing Crosby with Trudy Erwin • **You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To** Dinah Shore • **I'll Get By** The Ink Spots • **Is You Is, or Is You Ain't (Ma' Baby)** Bing Crosby and the Andrews Sisters • **Long Ago (and Far Away)** Jo Stafford • **Skylark** Glenn Miller and his Orchestra • **I'll Be Seeing You** Bing Crosby.

Forties Favourites (1944–1947)
Sentimental Journey Doris Day • **It Had To Be You** Dick Haymes and Helen Forrest • **I Can't Begin To Tell You** Bing Crosby • **To Each His Own** The Ink Spots • **Ac-cent-tchu-ate the Positive** Bing Crosby and the Andrews Sisters • **Prisoner of Love** The Ink Spots • **They Say It's Wonderful** Bing Crosby • **I'm Always Chasing Rainbows** Perry Como • **A Couple of Song and Dance Men** Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire • **Inka Dinka Doo** Jimmy Durante • **Five Minutes More** Tex Beneke and the Glenn Miller Orchestra • **Mine** Bing Crosby and Judy Garland • **Anniversary Song** Dinah Shore • **There's No Business Like Show Business** Bing Crosby, Dick Haymes and the Andrews Sisters.

Timeless Melodies – Unforgettable Stars (1947–1949)
I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now Perry Como • **Alexander's Ragtime Band** The Andrews Sisters • **Dear Hearts and Gentle People** Bing Crosby • **'A' You're Adorable** Jo Stafford and Gordon MacRae • **On the Sunny Side of the Street** Bing Crosby • **Little White Lies** Dick Haymes • **Again** Doris Day • **A Tree in the Meadow** Monica Lewis with the Ames Brothers • **Dance Ballerina Dance** Bing Crosby • **Lavender Blue (Dilly Dilly)** Dinah Shore • **Bali Ha'i** Perry Como • **Now Is the Hour** Bing Crosby • **Forever and Ever** Russ Morgan and his Orchestra • **Galway Bay** Bing Crosby.

Souvenirs of the Memorable Fifties (1950–1952)
The World Is Waiting for the Sunrise Les Paul and Mary Ford • **Play a Simple Melody** Bing and Gary Crosby • **A Bushel and a Peck** Doris Day • **You're Just In Love** Perry Como and the Fontane Sisters • **All My Love** Bing Crosby • **Sentimental Me** The Ames Brothers • **Anytime** Eddie Fisher • **Autumn Leaves** Bing Crosby • **Nevertheless (I'm In Love with You)** The Mills Brothers • **No Other Love** Jo Stafford • **If I Were a Bell** Bing Crosby and Patti Andrews • **Botch-a-Me** Rosemary Clooney • **Sparrow In the Tree Top** Bing Crosby and the Andrews Sisters • **Sound Off** Vaughn Monroe.

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Reader's Digest

The Australian Scene — Memo from Machliss

If any readers of BING have ever visited Melbourne, they will be aware that our city is fortunate in that it possesses a world class Art Centre complex featuring a large art gallery, a collection of spectacular theatres and a performing arts museum. This latter features several major displays a year covering all aspects of film, theatre and general entertainment in Australia. Recently, I'm happy to say, the performing arts museum provided a public forum for The Victorian Bing Crosby Society when it held a major two month exhibition on fan clubs. Along with dozens of other groups such as those interested in Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, and Al Jolson, we were invited to submit material for a display ("Invited" sounds as if we're rather important, which we're not. I have a feeling that a friend at a local radio station supplied our name to the organisers.)

Whatever the reason we were approached, we were happy to send in several back issues of The Crosby Voice plus membership application forms, etc, and were rewarded with a special display featuring the magazine plus other relevant information. Albert Leonard, who provides the illustrations for our covers, should be delighted to hear that his work has been hung in a museum already! The exhibition was a great success and we even received several enquiries for membership.

An interesting video recently surfaced in a city store. A commercial release of 'Holiday Inn', it bore the sub-title 'The Bing Crosby Collection' which makes me wonder what else is in this series. As the price was a ridiculous $44, and as I already had the movie on tape, I didn't bother to purchase it. I presume that the tape was an import as I haven't seen it elsewhere.

A few more CDs have surfaced recently, including the two collections on London of Bing's 1931 material. Another welcome release, out on CD presumably to capitalise on the release of the movie, is the all-star World War II 'Dick Tracy' broadcast. The label claims 'over 70 minutes long' which would mean that it contains more than the LP releases of the 1970s but I have not as yet checked out what this is.

Bing's 1931 recording of 'I Found A Million Dollar Baby' made a pleasant addition to our TV viewing recently with the repeat of the mini-series 'Poor Little Rich Girl', the story of Woolworths heiress Barbara Hutton. The track, suitably edited, was featured beind the credits of the show, but if my ears didn't deceive me, sounded slightly fast. I guess the producers needed it to run to a certain length and didn't think that anyone would notice the difference. Well they did!!!

A couple of Crosby movies have been aired in recent times — a sparkling colour print of 'Dixie' at 3.00 in the morning (what did we do before video recorders?) and 'High Society' on the ABC. The latter, for those who don't know, is Australia's national government run commercial free network, so we were able to get a nice copy without edits. Interestingly, the colour on 'Dixie' actually has held up better over the years. 'High Society' is definitely looking on the murky side, but of course the colour process in use in the 1950s was inferior from the point of stability than that used a decade earlier.

Our August meeting of the VBCS was our annual joint get-together with our friends at the International Al Jolson Society and was a great success with at least 80 people present. Our double feature consisted of Jolson's last major film appearance 'Rose of Washington Square', plus 'Pennies From Heaven' which showcased the more mellow image of Bing that started taking over somewhere around the mid-1930s. I've often wondered what happened to change Bing from the stilted radio crooner of his early features to the natural, easy-going character that was to sustain him for the rest of his career. Was it the influence of his new radio writer Carroll Carroll, was it the influence of his new musical director John Scott Trotter or was it Bing's increasing maturity? Perhaps it was a combination of all three — I guess we'll never know.

Well that's enough from me. More news from down under in the next issue of BING.

Bob Machliss

Editor's Proscript. Since receiving the above column from Bob, we were saddened to learn that pressures of work and the increasing demands of producing "The Crosby Voice" have forced Bob to end publication of the magazine in its present form. VBCS will continue, but only as what it originally was — a localised appreciation society. We hope that Bob will be able to continue with his colum for BING.

BING ON THE BOX

Since our last edition, the following films have been seen on British television:-

Riding High (Channel 4, 7th July)
Dixie (BSB 13th and 28th July)
Mr. Music (BBC1 7th August)
The King of Jazz (abridged version) (BSB 6th September)
The Princess and the Pirate (Granada 30th September)

BSB is the relatively new satellite station and they are certainly doing their bit to cater for Bing fans. Probably there are a very few of us who can receive BSB at present but let us hope that they repeat the films in the future. I understand that, apart from Sky and BSB, it is possible to receive other satellite stations in the UK also and films seen this year include Check And Double Check, Reaching For the Moon and The Greatest Show On Earth.

BING ON THE STEAM RADIO

The anniversary of Bing's death again brought us good coverage of his work on radio. Alan Dell's Radio 2 tribute on Sounds Easy on October 14th, used many of Les Gaylor's suggestions and again we must express our thanks to Alan for his consistent support of Bing. Local radio too had its special programmes and amongst those we have heard about was Trevor Littlechild's "Bing Tribute" in his programme "Time Was" on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire on October 13th. Also Peter Moreton on BBC Radio Northampton turned his "It Ought To Be Band" programme over to a tribute to Bing and Al Jolson on October 22nd. (Al Jolson died on October 23rd 1950).

We hear from Stan White that KCBC Radio (based in Kettering) regularly play Bing records but they have only two 45's featuring him. Apparently they prefer 45's and EP's to LP's as they are so much easier to handle. Stan asks for any members who might be able to make a free gift of any Bing 45's or EP's to KCBC to contact him. It does not matter if they are a bit worn as the station's equipment can mask this. (See "One Sweet Letter" for Stan's address.) An appeal at the Leeds function for such records has already brought forth a most generous donation of good condition discs from Don Haizelden to whom grateful thanks are expressed.

50 Years of the Billboard Top Ten

Bing's photograph iin the middle of a page in the Sunday Telegraph some months ago drew our attention to an article commemorating 50 years of the Billboard Top Ten. In July, 1940, Billboard magazine compiled the first national hit parade in the USA by asking about 50 stores for details of their best selling records. That first top 10 was:

1.	I'll never smile again	Tommy Dorsey
2.	The Breeze and I	Jimmy Dorsey
3.	Imagination	Glen Miller
4.	Playmates	Kay Kyser
5.	Fools rush in	Glenn Miller
6.	Where was I	Charlie Barnett
7.	Pennsylvania 65000	Glenn Miller
8.	Imagination	Tommy Dorsey
9.	Sierra Sue	Bing Crosby
10.	Make Believe Island	Mitchell Ayres

Great to see our man in that first list although we had not realised that Sierra Sue was so popular. We should dearly love to see details of Bing's other entries in the Billboard charts over the years but this information is not readily available to us.

It was 1952 before charts began in the UK and it was the New Musical Express who began the fashion here by launching their top 12. That superb publication, the Guinness Book of British Hit Singles, covers all entries since the first chart and although Bing's peak period had passed, he still featured usefully in the subsequent years as follows:-

1952 Isle of Innisfree (reached No. 3)
1952 Zing A Little Zong (No. 10)
1952 Silent Night (No. 8)
1954 Changing Partners (No. 9)
1955 Count Your Blessings (No. 11)
1955 Stranger in Paradise (No. 17)
1956 In A Little Spanish Town (No. 22)
1956 True Love (No. 4)
1957 Around the World (No. 5)
1975 That's What Life Is All About (No. 41)
1977 White Christmas (No. 5)
1982 Peace on Earth — Little Drummer Boy (No. 3)
1983 True Love (No. 70)
1985 White Christmas (No. 69)

Shall we see any more entries? It will probably need a film of Bing's life to push his records back into the charts unless we see an odd freak item similar to the Bing and David Bowie song. Any suggestions for a Bing single which might make it in today's pop world?

If we have a fault as collectors, it is that perhaps we tend to focus too much upon sound and vision and not enough on the written word. A new name to our pages, Michael Collins, an Irishman now resident in Florida, sets the record straight with

CULTURE AND THE CROONER

The English author, Ian Hamilton, recently brought out a book entitled, *Writers in Hollywood: 1915 - 1951*, which is a study of screenwriters, among them such eminent figures as William Faulkner and F. Scott Fitzgerald, who went West to ply their trade and perhaps waste their talent during Hollywood's fabled golden age.

In a pre-publication interview, Hamilton stated that he started studying these screenwriters when he was a student at Oxford in the late 1950's. At that time he sometimes saw five films a week.

> "I enjoyed them rather guiltily', he recalled, 'because in those days there was a definite divide between 'low culture' and 'high culture'."

Under the heading 'high culture' he included poetry, which was a great love of his. His passion for film belonged to a very different mental compartment and one which he would not too readily or willingly acknowledge.

Lodged somewhere in the recesses of my own memory of this period — and this, I think, illustrates Hamilton's point — is the recollection of a short piece by the then music critic of *The Sunday Times* (this would have been around 1958 or 1959), in which he took to task some celebrity, who had been guest the previous week on "Desert Island Discs", for choosing the mawkish bleatings of a crooner among the eight gramophone records which he intended to take with him to this remote and imaginary island retreat. How anybody, of even the meanest intelligence, could take such people seriously was beyond this critic's imagining. He re-echoed the sentiments of one of his colleagues, who once referred to them as "croonuchs", and expressed the wish that hence-forward they might be banished from the airwaves, if not from the face of the earth.

The arch stuffiness of that music critic's comments, which indeed were also pointedly digressive and away from the mainstream of his column, exemplifies the great divide between the two cultures that Hamilton alluded to in his interview. I have no doubt that much has changed since those far off days and to that paper's credit it must be said it later did Bing (who, incidentally, I have no reason to suppose is to be identified with the anonymous crooner mentioned) proud in its colour supplement by a timely reappraisal, written in the mid-seventies by their jazz critic, the late Derek Jewell, — an article which, as many readers will know, was reprinted and incorporated in the elegant programmes issued on the occasion of Bing's Palladium concerts.

Be that as it may, I was still not prepared for the following editorial which appeared in the reputable Jesuit publication, *America*. This magazine, I should point out for the benefit of English readers, is what is known as the 'journal of ideas'. It is a weekly magazine, not dissimilar in content and format to the *Spectator* and *New Statesman*. It covers a wide range of social and political issues and contains the usual quota of book reviews, together with film and theatre criticism. Here are the two opening paragraphs.

> **IN THE EARLY 1970's, conductor André Previn broadcast an extensive interview on the BBC with the famous British soprano, Dame Janet Baker. Midway through it, Previn asked her whom she considered the finest singer she had ever heard. He expected her to answer with the name of a famous diva like Rose Ponselle or Renata Tebaldi or Joan Sutherland, but Dame Janet surprised him by replying simply "Ella Fitzgerald." The great jazz-pop singer Peggy Lee was once asked who she thought was the greatest jazz singer ever, and she seemed startled and said, "You mean—after Ella?"**
>
> **Throughout her 55-year career Ella Fitzgerald has been the recipient of countless tributes—some of them formal (doctorates from Yale, Dartmouth, Washington University and many others) and even more of them informal (both Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra acknowledged her as the "criterion" of pop singing; and, in poll after poll, over 90 percent of non-classical musicians admitted she was their favorite).**

I immediately wrote back to the Editor in Chief, George W. Hunt s.j. to thank him for his sensitive, if unexpected, tribute to Ella Fitzgerald in the Feb. 24th issue of *America*.

> "Implicitly', I wrote, 'your editorial was a reasoned and intelligent plea for a more tolerant and ecumenical approach to the differing art forms and a telling argument against excessively rigid compartmentalization which is a feature of our time and which is, all too frequently, quite meaningless. To be fair, these artificial and snobbish boundaries are usually erected by the critics, not by the artists themselves. After all, Yehudi Menuhin plays happily side by side with Stephane Grappelli and seems none the worse for his experience, as does James Galway with The Chieftains. Kiri Ti Kanawa can belt out the main numbers from "South Pacific" (though rather clumsily to my ears), with the same zest and enthusiasm as if she were a hoofer weaned on the Broadway stage. Who is to say that Benny Goodman was any less fulfilled while ripping it up with Lionel Hampton or Teddy Wilson than he was when playing some sedate classical piece by Copland or Milhaud?
>
> I remember hearing somebody once say that when the great Irish tenor, Count John McCormack, wanted to relax at home he very often played the records of Bing Crosby! Now, I am perfectly certain that McCormack was not 'slumming it'. He, of all people, had a most discerning ear and could well

recognise a singer, who in his own particular field, was as masterly as McCormack was in his.

Crosby, like Fitzgerald, though of a previous generation of singers, was shaped by early jazz influence and has frequently acknowledged his indebtedness to those with whom he worked; Ellington, Armstrong, Venuti and Lang, Bix Beiderbecke. These early influences were transmuted through his native genius into a developed, highly individual style, and he remains, arguably, the most influential popular singer of the 20th Century. Time will, I am sure, validate his reputation, at present somewhat muted, and accord him the credit he deserves."

Some months passed by and I gave the matter no further thought when a second editorial appeared, this time in the July 14th edition. If the first editorial found me unprepared, the second fairly took my breath away.

I HAVE JUST DISCOVERED a wonderful book for a soggy, summer Saturday when your elbows stick to every surface and you can't decide whether that odd odor belongs to your hair, the upholstery or your dog Rover. It is entitled *Jazz Singing: America's Great Voices from Bessie Smith to Bebop and Beyond* (Scribner's, $29.95, 477p.), written by the young music critic for The Village Voice and for several jazz journals, Will Friedwald, whose father convinced him that "a person's true wealth isn't measured in money but in Louis Armstrong records.".

The two brightest stars in this history are Louis Armstrong and Bing Crosby, the founders of a tradition and the transformers of the popular song....

The young Bing Crosby listened, and he "absorbed the new instrumental soloists, especially Armstrong and Bix Beiderbecke: their approach to melodic organization, their use of rhythm, and their concept and vocabulary of improvisation." With his exceptionally pleasant, flexible voice, he early on integrated jazz with Tin Pan Alley, converting dross to gold by injecting jazz feeling (and tempos) into banal score sheets. No wonder, then, that Crosby was the *only* white singer allowed on Harlem jukeboxes. (If Friedwald's book circulates properly, it ought to revive interest in the great Der Bingle, who mightily deserves it at long last.)

Once again, I emphasize that this is a journal which normally deals with social, political and theological issues and would certainly not normally deal with such figures as Louis Armstrong, Bing Crosby or Ella Fitzgerald.

The second item I want to consider, though it does not deal directly with Bing, comes from an equally unexpected source. Earlier this year, The American novelist and critic, Wilfrid Sheed, published his latest collection entitled Essays in Disguise. This contained a piece on Frank Sinatra for which he originally got a Grammy award. The book itself was a landmark in that it was the first time, to my knowledge, that a major literary critic has paid attention to the work of a popular singer. The book was widely reviewed in this country and every review that I read singled out the Sinatra essay for favourable comment.

In his general introduction to the collection, Sheed explains how the Sinatra piece was first written in the form of liner notes (what we call "sleeve notes") for an album entitled *The Columbia Years*.

He goes on to write,

"The American popular song — which may be our most satisfactory gift to the world, if only because we take it for granted and don't boast about it, if anything enough — seemed to be everywhere when I was a boy: it was the air we breathed and whistled, and it played flagrantly in train wheels and car engines, and more fastidiously in ticking clocks and empty rooms, those emblems of childhood. Even today there is always a tune either entering or leaving my head, with whatever effect that may have on my writing . . . "

This latter sentiment is something with which most BING readers would readily identify. The wonder of it, it seems to me, is not that Sheed wrote what he did, but that so few other writers have ever done so before him. H.L. Menken, Edmund Wilson, Mary McCarthy, John Updike have all written extensively about the American scene in all its aspects, but precious little that I am aware of, on the American popular song and nothing on its greatest interpreter.

The English literary contingent has been no less reticent. Reg Bristo, many readers will recall, invited occasional contributions from members containing references to Bing which they had come across, either in a novel, poem or play, that they had recently read. Input was sparse. A quotation from Dennis Potter, here, one from Edna O'Brien there, a line from Betjeman, another from Louis MacNiece. That was about the size of it. England's greatest living novelist, Graham Greene, was contemptuously dismissive of Crosby in some of his pre-war *Spectator* film reviews, but then, as has been suggested, music was never Mr. Greene's strongest suit.

Anthony Burgess, whom I shall always remember as a lonely dissentient voice during the period when Beatlemania was spreading across the land and Lennon & McCartney were being hailed as the greatest composers since Mozart (even Cyril Connolly had succumbed to their charms), is probably the best equipped musically to write with authority in this general area, should he ever choose to do so.

The late Philip Larkin was an interesting case. Probably the greatest modern poet since W.H. Auden, he is reputed to have said in one interview that he was first drawn to writing poetry through hearing Crosby sing "Love is Just Around the Corner".

It was, apparently, the bridge passage that caught his fancy.

Venus de Milo was noted for her charms
But strictly between us/You're cuter than Venus
And what's more you've got arms . . .

Students of Larkin's poetry tend to be fairly cautious when he goes into his demotic mode and it is unlikely that future researchers in their quest for literary antecedents will go beyond the acknowledged influence of Yeats and Hardy to considering the claims of lyricist,

Leo Robin.

At any rate, Larkin's collected jazz criticism, *All What Jazz* (1970) contains nothing more than a few passing references to Bing. His close friend and fellow author, Kingsley Amis, who shares Larkin's enthusiasm for jazz, has published some volumes of criticism in addition to his fiction and poetry, but nothing that I can recall on Mr. C.

All of which goes to show how singular and unusual is Sheed's *Essays in Disguise*. Interestingly, Sheed, who is the son of noted Catholic writers and publishers, Frank Sheed and Maisie Ward, paid Bing a handsome tribute some years back in an article originally published in the quarterly magazine, *The Critic*. In this article, he recalled his own Catholic upbringing. In particular, he referred to a peculiar kind of Catholic sensibility, a sort of levelheadedness, which, at its best, approximates to humility.

Humility and Forgiveness, one ought to add are considered by Lord Longford (another Catholic writer), to be the two most distinctively Christian virtues, in the sense that if they are to be found at all in other religions, they are to be found in a very inchoate and undeveloped form.

Sheed makes much the same point, but in a specifically Catholic context.

> "Nobody is altogether worthless to us and that shows up in one's work. But with it goes a sense that nobody's that great either, that human greatness is probably a deception and if you think you've got it you're better off without the information . . . Don't take yourself too seriously, jump on anyone who does, and be absolutely merciless to anyone's pretentions . . . [Example] When Nathaniel Crosby — from the last litter of Crosby kids — won the U.S. Amateur, he was asked, "What would your old man have said?" And he answered without missing a breath, "He would've said, 'Don't let it go to your head'." That was the Catholic upbringing."

But I digress. Too much has been written for good or ill — indeed, mostly for ill in recent years — about Crosby the man. That he was vastly gifted in so many areas is undeniable and this, in itself, is part of the problem. Magazine articles, by and large, tend to concentrate on his qualities as an actor, golfer, businessman, superstar, Catholic icon (of sorts), family man, raconteur. Curiously little is written, when you come down to it, on his abilities as a singer and it is on his qualities as a singer that his reputation ultimately rests.

Friedwald's book concentrates on Crosby the singer and, as such, falls squarely within the tradition of Mize, Ulanov and Pleasants — a body of work which is small, select and, sadly, long out of print.

Like many people, I find that my tastes have changed imperceptibly over the years and as I advance into middle age I notice I have moved away from what a friend of mine has dubbed "polyester music" into trying on cloth of a more durable texture.

I hesitate to call it classical music, since strictly speaking that term refers to a particular historical period of Western Music, which comes between the Baroque and the Romantic periods, and is only used loosely to distinguish it from that music which is called "Popular" — a word which is equally contentious and begs more questions than it answers. Elgar's Cello Concerto, for example, or Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" are, by any standards, extrememly popular, though one could hardly classify them as Popular Music.

"Serious" music is no help, since jazz, especially in its later, more progressive forms, is if anything over serious and certainly very far from popular.

"Concert" music is equally confusing as this can apply to anything from Country to Hard Rock. In the last analysis, all one can say and hope is that only the best, in whichever category, will ultimately survive.

All of which leads me, by way of bringing these random reflections to a close, to Bernard Levin's celebrated article in *The Times* of July 13th, 1987. In this article, Levin refers to John Lennon's claim that the Beatles were more famous than Christ.

> "He also called upon Beethoven to roll over, though Beethoven took no notice; possibly he didn't hear the instructions."

Now, Levin does allow that in their day the Beatles may well have been as famous as Christ, and, given media hype, may well have sold more records than Beethoven, despite the fact that he had a hundred and fifty years start on them. What Lennon omitted to take into consideration was the crucial factor of *time*, that final arbiter to whose judgement all things are eventually submitted.

> "My favourite image for the process is what I have called History's Sieve; down the years and down the days, it is being gently, unceasingly, shaken, and since the holes never vary in size, it follows that sooner or later that which is of enduring value will remain in the sieve, and that which is not will fall through. No no one can cheat it, no one can arrest its action, no one can bribe the shaker; Christ and Lennon, the C sharp minor Quartet and 'I Wanna Hold Your Hand', you and me — the quiet, inexorable susurration of the sieve goes on."

Of course, Levin cannot predict what the outcome will be, but he does hazard a guess.

> ". . . For long after the last trace of Lennon and his music has vanished utterly, Christ's fame, which is the real kind, will still be challenging and comforting mankind. So, now I come to think of it, will Beethoven's. But then he never told Mozart to roll over."

READING LIST

I finished writing the above at the peak of Florida's steamy summer, when temperatures stood in the high 90s and the dollar stood at $1.97 to the pound. Naturally, I have no means of knowing what the exchange rate will be like by the time you read this, or, indeed, whether by then some of these books will have been published under a separate imprint in the U.K. At any rate, they are worth noting for your Christmas shopping list.

Jazz Singing: America's Great Voices from Bessie Smith to Bebop and Beyond
Will Friedwald (Scribner's: $29.95)
Quirky and controversial, this book, nevertheless, if only because of the paucity of extant literature on Bing, should be required reading for all Crosby fans. Extended treatment is also given to Billy Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald, Mel Torme and Frank Sinatra among others, but Friedwald, in addition, deals with singers not normally thought of as jazz performers, such as Perry Como (whom Billy Holiday admired), Dick Haymes and Jo Stafford.

Essays in Disguise Wilfrid Sheed (Knopf: 1990: $19.95)
A penetrating mind, an abrasive style and oftentimes caustic wit all combine to make Sheed a formidable adversary, but he can be particularly kind to those whom he admires, as witness his touching memoir of his parents, *Frank and Maisie*, and his biography of Clare Booth Luce. His essay on Frank Sinatra is another case in point, and, for good measure, this collection also includes a chapter on Jerome Kern.

Dialogues in Swing Fred Hall (Pathfinder Publishing: $12.95)
This very stylishly produced paperback (also available in hardback) is based on a series of interviews with many of the leading bandleaders and singers of the Swing Era, including Bob Crosby, Artie Shaw, Dick Haymes, Peggy Lee and Maxene Andrews. Fred Hall — an American version of Alan Dell — hosts a syndicated radio show which is heard here daily from Coast to Coast. He is very much a 'Crosby man' and this book is replete with references to Bing. It also features a delightful interview with Jimmy Van Heusen ("Bing was the grand daddy of them all. He taught them all how to sing."). Demand for this volume may bring about more of the same, so the project is worth supporting. It can be ordered directly from Pathfinder Publishing, P.O. Box 612478, South Lake Tahoe, California 95761.

Pop Memories (1890-1954) Joel Whitburn (Record Research Books: $60)
An expensive purchase and of limited appeal, this book purports to be the first fully researched, fully documented history of popular music from the end of the last century to the beginning of the Rock Era, based on information culled from a variety of pop charts. In fact, most of the material relating to Bing is readily available to Crosby collectors from other sources. What it does provide is a list of his charted recordings in chronological order with each recording's highest rated position, the date when it first entered the charts, how long it remained there and so forth. A substantial volume of some 660 pages, it is not available in stores, but can be ordered from Record Research Inc., Dept. M9, P.O. Box 200, Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin 53051.

Also worth mentioning are

The Swing Era by Gunther Schuller (Oxford University Press: New York 1989: $30. This is the second volume in Schuller's monumental history of jazz and is a work of solid, almost intimidating, scholarship. Very attractively produced, it should be of great interest to many readers of BING.

and the following two books which I have on my shelves, but have not, as yet, read.

Benny Goodman and the Swing Era by James Lincoln Collier (Oxford University Press: New York 1989: $22.95)

and

As Thousands Cheer; The Life of Irving Berlin by Laurence Bergreen (Viking: 1990: $24.95)

I wish I could add **Cocktails for Two**, the autobiography of Sam Coslow, because it contains a wealth of material on Bing. However, I only came across this recently in a second hand bookstore. Published by Arlington House in 1977, it is almost certainly out of print now.

American Mail Order Firms are generally reliable and efficient and will send books, either by surface or airmail, to all countries. The following, which is just one of many, I have had occasion to use on a few occasions and they give excellent service.

Book Call, 59 Elm Street, New Canaan, CT 06840.

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Michael Collins is a Catholic priest who was born in Cork, Ireland; educated in that country and at Oxford, where he read English Language and Literature; is, at present, ministering in the Diocese of Orlando, Florida.

IT'S BEEN A LONG, LONG TIME . . .

by JOHN BASSETT

If you have thoroughly read the contents of "BING" in recent months, you will have discovered for the first time (or been reminded of the fact) that yours truly was Editor of this illustrious journal from 1971 to 1975, followed by a seven-year stint as the ICC's Discographical Consultant.

When I was asked by Ken Crossland to write a few words for the journal, it occurred to me that I am now the last surviving Past Editor of "BING". Furthermore, with the exception of issue 93, I have not seen a copy of the journal for eight years, since the day that Reg, in his infinite wisdom, decreed that past editors were not entitled to receive complimentary issues! I am told that much has changed. Incidentally, my appearance here is merely a 'one off' event for old time's sake, and is not intended to herald my jubilant return from a happy retirement.

Twenty years ago, the idea of collecting every aspect of Crosbyana seemed an inviting and exciting prospect. My dear friend Bob Roberts led the field, and two visits to his Crosby room in the early 1970s left me with an immense desire to emulate his achievements. However, money and opportunity were never in abundance, and I found it necessary to curtail my youthful exuberance and settle for a simpler approach. After much deliberation I chose to concentrate my efforts on Bing's commercially recorded output.

Fortunately, my interest in Crosbyana was founded at a time when most of the original Brunswick LPs were still in the catalogue, priced at little more than 30 shillings each, and I wasted little time in purchasing all and sundry before their eventual deletion. Occasionally, a bargain would turn up, and I recall my ecstatic joy in obtaining mint copies of the 10-inch Brunswick LPs, BING—THE EARLY THIRTIES, Volumes 1 and 2, for 50 pence each! Incidentally, on my last meeting with Bing in October 1977, he looked at the cover photographs of these rare albums and declared "I *never* had hair like that! I look more like Harry!" He was right, of course, and one can only hazard a guess as to why his picture was 'doctored' into a style reminiscent of Elvis Presley!

The years have been fruitful, as evidenced by my superb collection, and whilst comparisons cannot be made with those owned by stalwarts such as Colin Pugh and Ralph Harding, it is generally considered that I own an enviable amount of material . . . visitors to "Bingville" will not argue with that! In recent years, lack of space has compelled me to reduce my incessant purchasing, whilst a growing family has demanded more of my time and attention . . . and rightly so.

As a child in the 1950s, the first Crosby record I remember owning was the 1939 version of "Stardust" with Matty Malneck's orchestra. For some reason, I used to be frightened by the orchestral introduction which, to me, sounded 'spooky' . . . I suppose it put me in mind of the BBC radio series "Journey into Space" which was popular at the time. To this day, the opening bars still make me shudder, but Bing's dulcet tones quickly dispel all thoughts of aliens landing in the garden!

Without exaggeration, Bing's "Hark the Herald Angels Sing"/"It came upon the midnight clear", played on Radio Luxembourg in 1968, was destined to change my life. Prior to this, I had paid little attention to Bing Crosby and seldom played the dozen or so Brunswick 78s which formed part of my enormous collection of dance band and personality records. But Bing's recording of these cherished Christmas carols had a profound effect on me. In my opinion, this was the finest thing ever committed to wax, and I craved for more.

My first microgroove purchases were the Hallmark LP of CROSBY CLASSICS and the Reprise single of "Step to the Rear". Joining the International Crosby Circle was a wise move on my part. Frank Murphy had just published the first edition of the "Bing Crosby Mini-Discography" and I looked upon this as my Bible, ticking off each and every title as it entered the collection.

My five-year editorship of "BING" proved to be a most rewarding experience, and culminated in my acquaintance and eventual meetings with the great man himself. In consequence, the ensuing years brought forth a deluge of letters, Christmas cards and taped messages, all in packets bearing the familiar red and blue 'Air Mail' sticker.

Looking back over the years, I have only one regret. In all my meetings and correspondence with Bing, I never got around to asking him three simple questions: (1) What was his favourite hymn? (2) What was his favourite Christmas carol? and (3) Did he, like myself, find difficulty in singing in the 'family key' when attending church services? These questions have remained unanswered since that fateful day in 1977.

I am elated at the opportunity to share these thoughts and memories with you, and I wish Ken and the ICC every success in the future.

Goodbye, thank you and good luck to all.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON OUR PAST EDITOR

JOHN BASSETT can claim the unusual distinction of being, in Bing Crosby's own words, "the worst audience I've ever worked for". It goes without saying that Bing's remark was made with humorous intent as he related the story of his last Christmas show into a cassette recorder. Until that moment, John and a colleague had remained quietly unobtrusive, apparently bearing stern countenances—at least it seemed that way to Bing. Having described the scene where Stanley Baxter appears as Bob Hope in the guise of a court jester, Bing looked up and declared: "It seems to me to be very amusing, but these two gentlemen here don't find it a bit amusing—the worst audience I've ever worked for!" His comment caused much mirth, and with chuckling from those concerned, he continued with the narrative. The six-minute message is one of four privately-recorded tapes which take pride of place in John's collection at "Bingville"—the name given to his home at Rochford in Essex.

John, a collector of 78rpm discs since the late 1950s, was first enraptured with Bing's singing voice on Christmas Eve 1968, upon hearing the Old Groaner's recording of "Hark The Herald Angels Sing"/"It came upon the midnight clear" played on Radio Luxembourg. Having 'fallen under the spell' of this great man, John set about building up a Crosby collection which today embraces over 1,700 records of all speeds and sizes. The collection, conservatively valued at £10,000, contains a copy of the world's most rare commercially-issued 78 of Bing—the UK Ariel pressing of "Susianna" (worth in excess of £150) of which only three copies are known to exist in Great Britain.

John personally met Bing on three occasions between 1974 and 1977, as well as attending both telerecordings of the "PARKINSON" show, two London Palladium concerts, and a recording session in Chappells Studio, New Bond Street, at which John and his wife Susan watched Bing record "Yours sincerely" for the United Artists album "BEAUTIFUL MEMORIES".

On the afternoon of 6th October 1977, John visited Bing at his flat in Chester Square, London, and recorded what is believed to be Bing's last privately-taped message, on which occasion the above-mentioned incident took place. At John's request, Bing agreed to sign record labels and books, and pose for various photographs, one of which has been the object of everyone's attention for many years—at "Bingville" hangs a framed, two-foot square photograph of John's older son, Richard (then 2½-years-old) sitting on Bing's lap. Richard remembers the occasion well, and bears the knowledge that he was the last child to be photographed with Bing, merely eight days before the Old Groaner's death.

John is proud to have been regarded by Bing as a friend and loyal supporter, and dozens of letters and signed photographs bear evidence of this. Included amongst these are congratulatory letters received on the occasion of John and Susan's wedding, and the birth of their first child. In 1975, Susan was delighted to receive a photograph taken of herself and Bing in Chappells studio, on which he had written "To Susan, love Bing Crosby".

John 'retired' from the Crosby scene in 1987, after 20 years' involvement with various projects and journals. A list of his editorial involvements during that time looks impressive, to say the least . . .

Resident Columnist for TETLOW'S VINTAGE RECORD GUIDE (1967-1969)
Assistant Editor of SQUARE ONE (1969-1970)
Resident Columnist for THE GUNN REPORT (1969 to date)
Editor of BING (1971-1975)
Discographical Consultant for the International Crosby Circle (1975-1982)
Editor of BINGVILLE NEWS (1982-1987)
Joint compiler of:
BING—JUST FOR THE RECORD
THE BING CROSBY LP-OGRAPHY (1st and 2nd editions)
THE BING CROSBY MINI-DISCOGRAPHY (2nd and 3rd editions)
THE A TO Z OF BING CROSBY

With all this activity behind him, John now devotes his time and attention to his family, although his record collecting interests remain undiminished. John frequently loans records to BBC Essex for inclusion in the weekly programme, "The Old Record Club", and in October 1989 he scripted and provided the 78s for a 30-minute tribute marking the 12th anniversary of Bing's death. John is a '78 man' at heart and, apart from Crosby collecting, owns hundreds of dance band and personality records dating from 1900 to 1950. During the late 1980s he successfully acquired virtually every song performed by the Music Hall artiste, Billy Williams, who made over 500 recordings before his untimely death in 1915 at the age of 37. John's other musical interests are many and varied, ranging from classical to 'heavy metal', but Bing remains dearest to his heart. If you twist his arm to name a favourite title, he will probably choose the 1955 recording of "Silent Night".

ITS CHRISTMAS TIME AGAIN

They say that Christmas brings out the best in people. That's certainly true when it comes to provides a stimulus to put pen to paper for the magazine. We have two non-regular contributors with us this issue, our Swedish friend Ragnar Uppman (who delighted so many of us last year with his very enterprising Christmas card) provides us with a nice story about two of Bing's rarer Christmas , recordings.

As a Swedish collector of Bing Crosby records and recordings and since a few years back even a member of some of the "Societies" the world over I noticed that some of his records have become rare and very hard or impossible to find.

Some years ago I learned from discography books that Bing recorded two songs in the early 70's to benefit Old St. Mary's Church in San Francisco. The two songs, "CHRISTMAS STAR" and "WE LOVE OLD ST. MARY'S". Bing sang with Old St. Mary's Choir. The LP-album (with rest of the songs on it sung by the Choir) was sold in a limited edition of one thousand copies titled **CHRISTMAS STAR**.

Then, fifteen years later (1988), I heard the song "CHRISTMAS STAR" for the first time from a (poor sounding) cassette. I found it to be a beautiful Christmas song and decided to do something trying to find a copy of that LP-album.

I simply wrote a letter to Old St. Mary's Church in San Francisco with an inquiry if there possibly could be a spare copy left in the shelves despite the many years gone by since the LP-album was of current interest. I even asked for a song-sheet of that song "CHRISTMAS STAR" composed by one Mr. Jack Sweeny.

I had almost forgotten my letter and the hope was gone when three and a half month later, to my big surprise I received a notification from Moonan Music, USA. I rushed to the Post Office, and there it was, at no cost at all, the CHRISTMAS STAR album (brand new and sealed) including a letter from one Mr. Robert Moonan, composer, organist, choir leader and personal friend of Mr. Crosby.

From Mr. Moonan's letter one can read . . . "Bing was a wonderful man. . . . and though I was his accompanist on a number of occasions, I was hesitant to ask him to do a recording with Old St. Mary's Choir. When he agreed so graciously, both the choir and myself were delighted as could be" . . . "We hope you will enjoy this recording as much as we in the choir enjoyed working with Bing" . . .

About two weeks later I received a long and nice letter and a song-sheet of "CHRISTMAS STAR" from the composer himself, Mr. Jack Sweeny, Hillsborough, Ca.

Mr. Sweeny writes . . . "What a pleasant surprise! Please find a copy of my music including a piano solo version and a short verse which was never used" . . . "If I recall correctly, I wrote "CHRISTMAS STAR" around 1969 or so. Mr. Moonan liked it and used it a great deal during those years — when at Christmas time he and his wonderful choir would perform all over San Francisco.

Around 1975 I felt moved to write an entire TV show (we called them "spectaculars" in those days, didn't we) with "CHRISTMAS STAR" as its pivot-point and which takes place on Christmas Eve in San Francisco — and hosted by Bing Crosby. At the time Bing and his second family were living practically around the corner here in Hillsborough — and Mr. Moonan was able to arrange an afternoon at Bing's convenience so that I could audition this show-idea and sing and play the new music I had written. We went over to his house — and he was most gracious and hospitable . . . and something might have come from it — further — had he been a bit younger at the time. That was only a couple of years before he died in Spain. To my knowledge that record has never been on the air here" . . .

That's the story about the "CHRISTMAS STAR" and very nice words about Bing too. Pity that Mr. Sweeny's TV show-idea never came through. To say I'm the proud owner of the album, song-sheet and those nice letters, is to put it mildly.

More to come. Just before Christmas 1989, to my very, very big surprise, I received a large green envelope from Mr. Jack Sweeny Jr. containing a song-sheet for a BRAND NEW SONG titled **"IT'S CHRISTMAS TIME"**, composed by Mr. Jack Sweeny.

What a nice Christmas gift. The song is very good and I think Bing would have liked it.

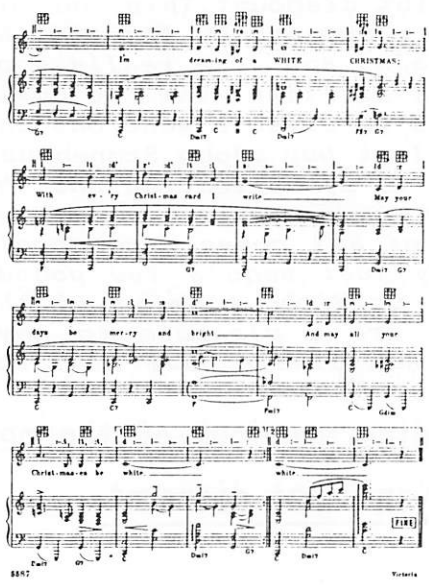
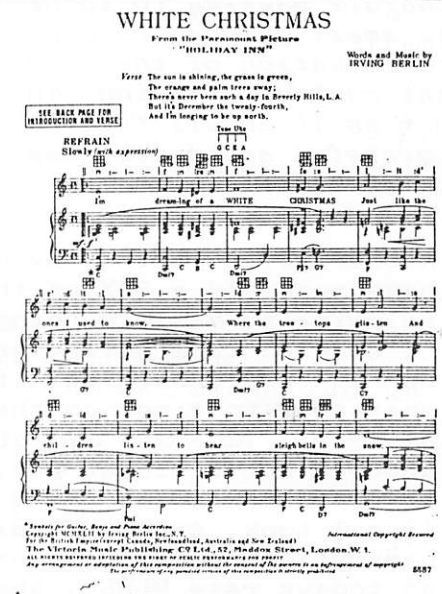
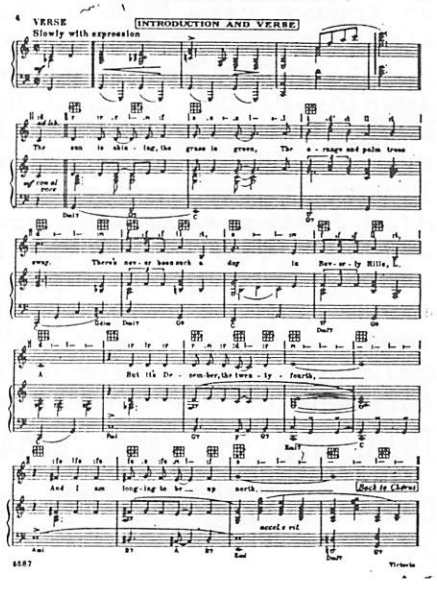
Thanks Ragnar — and a real Christmas ending too! Not everyone regards Christmas and Crosby as a welcome association though. Long time ICC member, JOHN BIGNELL offers us some "SOBERING THOUGHTS FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON — OR "THE GREAT WHITE CHRISTMAS MYTH"

I was travelling from my home to the office a couple of weeks ago, alone with my thoughts, when one of those unexpected but oh! so welcome interludes occurred as I idly switched on my car radio and they were actually playing a Bing record. It happened to be 'WELL! DID YOU EVEH?' the duet between Bing and Frank and for the first time ever I really became aware of the tremendous gap between the vocal talents of these two gentlemen. I must have heard this song at least a hundred times over the years but this time it struck me quite vividly that Frank's brash streetwise tones (and remember that in the mid-fifties Sinatra was at his peak) were eclipsed by Bing's masterly performance to a degree which makes one wonder where anyone could produce evidence of a 'rivalry' as far as vocal talents are concerned. The way in which Bing comes in, after Frank's opening lines with the casual, throwaway, amused query 'Is that what they're saying

— well, did you evah!' provides convincing evidence, in my opinion, that when posterity comes to review popular singing of the twentieth century, music lovers yet unborn will place Bing's singing on a plane as high above his contemparies as Caruso is now regarded in comparison to other classical tenor singers or W.G. Grace as a cricketer in comparison with other batsmen of the nineteenth century (and we must add the comparison between Don Bradman in this century compared with other batsmen).

All this is a rambling preamble to the main theme of this Yuletide essay. Regular, long time readers of 'BING' from the mid-seventies will probably be aware that I am less than 'hyped' by the media, record companies and all those with a vested interest in making yet more money out of its popularity to a stage where it has long had an adverse effect on the public and their critical acclaim and appreciation of Bing's really innovative singing both before and after (but particularly before) 1942.

And so to the Pasadena concert held in the States shortly before his second season of Palladium Shows in 1977. The late (and much lamented) Pearl Bailey was featured as one of the guest stars and in her case there can be no disputing this much abused description of those appearing with the main attraction. Pearl had such a great line in 'offbeat' humour, and that wonderful deep brown voice dispensing gems in a style which matched Bing's own talents in this department makes one regret that they were not featured together on a regular basis. This show gave them such an opportunity and Pearl did not let it pass without coming up with a line which had me roaring. In the midst of a bout of repartee between them the subject of 'White Christmas' once again came up and Pearl was unable to restrain her throwaway rejoinder: 'Man, for a long time I thought that it was the *only* song you ever knew'. I wonder how many of the 'live' audience and the millions who saw the televised transscript actually appreciated the irony and subtelty of Pearl's outrageous remark. I am sure Bing did because he laughed nearly as much as I did.

As a postscript and just to confirm what Reg Bristo often averred, Bing recorded so many Christmas songs vastly superior to 'White Christmas' — SILENT NIGHT is probably top of the list but we all know of many others. So the myth of 'White Christmas' is that he actually needed it at all. It really was — just another song.

I'm dream-ing of a WHITE CHRISTMAS;
With ev'-ry Christ-mas card I write
May your days be mer-ry and bright
And may all your
Christ-mas-es be white
FINE

WHITE CHRISTMAS
From the Paramount Picture
"HOLIDAY INN"
Words and Music by
IRVING BERLIN
SEE BACK PAGE FOR INTRODUCTION AND VERSE
REFRAIN
Slowly (with expression)
I'm dream-ing of a WHITE CHRISTMAS Just like the
ones I used to know, Where the tree - tops glis - ten And
chil - dren lis - ten to hear sleigh bells in the snow
The Victoria Music Publishing Co Ltd., 52, Maddox Street, London W.1.
5587

VERSE
Slowly with expression
INTRODUCTION AND VERSE
The sun is shin - ing, the grass is green, The or - anges and palm trees
sway. There's nev - er been such a day in Bev - er - ly Hills, L.
But it's De - cem-ber, the twen - ty - fourth,
And I am long-ing to be up north.
Back to Chorus
accel. e rit.
5587

November and time to assemble the 1990 Variety report, with its "Good news" aura somewhat dulled by our entry into this season of good will and , for anyone who can afford it,good cheer.How can good news enter into a reminder that Bing has gone, even if the whole bus - iness of Christmas involves a touch of the Crosby's?Easy to say that he is an inextricab- le part of the season, but in the heart of bleak October it is a different matter and the act of remembering him takes little out of the individual pocket. Perhaps we can take a note of Alan Fisher's mention of how certain Crosbyana folk would send Bing a small gift and how, without fail,he was quick to respond with a quite sincere "thanks".

It is hardly mawkish to think of this small newspaper space as a continuation of the same pleasant custom, arriving in December as it does.I feel he is as grateful as he ever was in happier times.

THE ONE AND ONLY

BING

May 3, 1903 October 14, 1977.

REMEMBERING THE ORIGINAL MR MUSIC

WORLDWIDE CROSBYANA

Hithertoo,as part of my covering all the bases proceedure I have received a FAX of the Tribute insert, usually a week or so prior to Variety going to press.This time and for reasons to do with them having newly altered the format of the paper so as to modernise it, I didn't. Consequently I was shattered to find, on the morning of the 17th,a typographic- al error. Not the end of the world nor anything to get mad about - but I did anyway. It is corrected here but they had reversed the T and the O in October and, accepting the hard line I took, Archie Carmichael,Advertising Support Executive has written me to say that the 1991 insert will be accepted at todays rate PLUS I shall have a 15% discount.This, on the figure normally submitted, represents around £60.*More to the point is the fact that we did it again, and in a really good looking block, which I hope you will all like. The two movie pack went like nobodies business and received a generous and understandable reaction as an excellent buy* .John Stonehouse judged it"the best video dub I have in my collection"*and the Alan Fisher tape also aroused interested comments from those who had it. Perhaps the best money of all comes from people who don't want to buy anything-they just send a few pounds along because it's a nice thing to do.Without being in the least sugary, I may tell you they are a pleasure to have calling through this door.They are and always have been the backbone of the event and why it's worth doing.*

TOTAL FOR THE YEAR =£654 50. including previews of the new cassette.STARTING 1990 with £297:90 and that discount.

GIRVAN PATTERSON,GWEN HARVEY,PAULA SANGSTER,GRACE BURTON,IAN B.LAWRENCE,ARTHUR BLOOD,JOHNNY JONES,KEN TWISS, ERNEST SUTKOWSKI,JOE FRANCIS,, BOB LUNDBERG, GEOFF MUSSELLE,IAN ARNOTT BERT DAY,A.C.TAYLOR,RON BOSLEY,LESLIE GAYLOR,FRED DOLBY, DON HAIZELDON,RAYMOND McCORMACK,JIM HALMS,COLIN PUGH,FRANK CHALENGER,LEN HAWKINGS,NEIL HUNTER, GORDON HOOPER,MICHAEL COLL - INS, MALCOLM MacFARLANE,MAURICE BEARDSMORE,ROY IRVINE, JOHN COOMES,TONY REQUINA, ALAN CHADWICK, LIONAL PAIRPOINT, GEORGE ADEY,JACK HOBDAY,JOHN STILES,SYLVIA CRENLIN, FRANK ARMSTRONG CHARLES MARTIN, ALBERT HARVEY, MICHAEL MANSLEY, EVELYN FLEAR PHILLIP REEVES,FRED REYNOLDS, DON LOVE,KEN WHITAKER, ARTHUR HOLMES, DES CAMPKIN,TREVOR WAGSTAFF, SEAMUS KELLY,JIM LOVELL MICHAEL O'DONOGHUE,JOHN STONEHOUSE MBE,ALF PEYTON,ETTY GITTS TONY HESSMAN,YVONNE BOWLES,CHARLES D.BAILLIE, CHARLES CULLEY SYLVIA LAWRENCE, STAN WILLCOX,ROGER ADEY,BRIAN FORD,A.H.TERRY, PAUL BENN, FRANS VAN DER KOLF, DENNIS SAVILLE,JANET SNOW JOHN NORRIS WOOD,JOHN MANSTON,PAUL MORRISON,CYRIL PARKER, E. BARNES, ENA HOOLEY, PIERRE BUGNOT, ARNOLD BAKER, PHIL MORGAN GORONWAY OWEN,ALASTAIR AIREY,PAUL HENNESSY,PATRICIA SULLIVAN FRANK DUCKWORTH,PERCY KEEPIN,ROBERT CAUNT,RON CHUCK,E.COLE - MAN,J.P.CARPENTER,LES STREET. *Also received were two sums on behalf of the late ERIC VINCENT; one from Doug Kerslake & CO and a separate In Memorium fund organised by Gwen Harvey.The same good lady, in conjunction with Arthur Blood, was instrumental in raising a splendid bounty from THE SINATRA SOC - ITY. OUR THANKS TO ALL CONCERNED IN A REMARKABLE YEAR.*

MAY I REMIND YOU THAT IF, IN ANY ONE OF MANY HECTIC MOMENTS, I'VE MISSED YOUR NAME, PLEASE LET ME KNOW AT ONCE.

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A CAHNERS PUBLICATION

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I must say that it is a relief to be starting off on another year of fund raising with what is one of the most sure-fire crowd pleasing tapes in a LONG time."SPEAKING OF BING" *is that rare animal, a 90 minute piece of purest Crosbyana that has rarely been heard by even the most civilised ear.For the privilege of issuing it, I must thank both* JERRY PERCHESKY *and* BILL("NO-E PLEASE) OSBORN *both of whom responded to my call without a moments hesitation. In fact, as you listen to* ALSTON RINKER and BOB CROSBY, *you are going to learn that this is a gentlemen all the way cassette ,making you wonder why it has been gathering dust for a while back.Maybe it's just a case of two people being in the right place at the right time , fully wired for sound.It CAN be as simple as that and while this relaxed and congenial outing may not qualify for any HI-FI awards,the conversation more than compensates.*You have my total guarentee that this is one for the best shelf in the house. *£4:0 including p&p, as before but the AMERICAN rate now has to be $10 due to both the rate and the postal increases.Sorry about that. A bill in the post will be fine by me and much easier for you.*

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CALENDAR 1991

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Letter from Leslie

You would be forgiven for thinking that someone who was a founder member of the "British Bing Club" back in 1950 might by now be finding his enthusiasm waning. Not so with the indomitable LESLIE GAYLOR. We hear elsewhere of his efforts to ensure that the October 14 anniversary was suitably commemorated. Here is Leslie's regular column — which incidentally was the first contribution to arrive for this Christmas issue — as early as August 26!

Here we are once again with Christmas almost upon us. It seems only yesterday that I was putting the finishing touches to my article for BING 93, last Christmas. First of all, may I start by thanking all those whose efforts go towards producing the BING magazine. It makes such wonderful reading and is a marvellous "keepsake". This, together with the efforts of the other Crosby clubs around the world do so much to keep Bing's memory alive, 13 years after his passing.

You might ask why do I keep harping on about the need to fight to keep Bing's memory alive. Well, I remember one of my visits to Shepperton Studios in Middlesex to see Bing in the early Sixties. One day, Bing happened to glance down at the top of his dressing table, temporarily distracted whilst he was looking for something. We had been discussing his long association with Decca Records when Bing said "Do you know, Leslie one day they will say "Who was Bing Crosby?" He went on to say that as the "newer fellas" came on the scene, the chances of the records he had made for Decca being re-issued throughout the world would diminish. The reasons he gave were that as the older people left the industry, they would be replaced by people with little knowledge of his career. Wise words all those years ago from the most famous song man of the century.

We have a situation at the moment which bears out what Bing was conveying. Early in 1989 I had the initiative to sit down and compile five Bing album concepts and to submit these to the very enterprising international manager of Pickwick Records, John Howard. What a fine relationship my long time friend and "ace Bing booster" Stan White has built up with Mr. Howard, who in turn regards Stan and myself as a couple of "good buddies". John wrote to say that he was most pleased with my compilation and as everyone knows, the first of these was released last Christmas, under the title of "Christmas with Bing". Judging by the volume of mail which the album generated, it seemed to hit the right note, I'm pleased to say. My only regret is that it failed to include my favourite version of "White Christmas", made with Paul Weston in 1955 and originally included on the album "A Christmas Sing with Bing".

For this Christmas I was hopeful that another of my compilations would hit the shelves to catch the Christmas marketing trade. Stan White had written some excellent sleeve notes for "Songs From Stage And Screen" and things were looking very promising since this album is made up of material well away from the regular re-issue category. What a disappointment then to hear from John Howard that he would plan release of the album for February 1991. It seems that because of the problem in getting "Christmas With Bing" onto the shelves early enough last year, Pickwick were keen to re-publicise it this year.

Nevertheless, both Stan and I knew that John had applied to MCA for the licence for the 16 tracks which make up "Songs From Stage And Screen". We were both struck a blow however when John wrote to say that MCA had not granted the licence. They had however promised to look at it again at a later date. So, you can see that it is the people who own the original recordings who are keeping them firmly under lock and key. We can see now the foresight Bing had in his comments to me in Shepperton all those years ago.

Something else which may be of interest to members concerns Bing's views about his own recordings. It was clear to me that he liked his own recordings best when they were done in the days of mono recordings. "In the days of the old 78" said Bing, "the golden rule was that the voice should always have the record. The accompaniment should always enhance the voice and not cover or give opposition to it." With stereo techniques Bing said, things have changed and you have a situation where they want to show off the arrangement and present the instrumentation for stereo effect. "I like it best Bing" I said "where the arrangements don't drown you out." I recall saying this to him at the final session for the "Seasons" album as I congratulated him on a fine performance after the playback of "Autumn In New York". A few days later I spoke to Ken Barnes who said that Bing had just phoned him to say that he had played over the cassette of the session and would Ken re-mix it to bring his voice forward!

On Monday May 1, I had a telephone call from BBC Radio 2 presenter David Jacobs. He requested that I send him a replacement copy of Bing's baptismal certificate, together with the write up I have from the "Tacoma News Tribune" from October 1977. David wanted it in time for Wednesday's broadcast and suggested I send it to his home address. True to his word, David used extracts from it over the air, and gave me a mention. A few days later, I received a letter addressed simply as "Leslie Gaylor, (Bing), Isle of Wight". Amazingly, it arrived as quickly as other first class mail items! The letter came from a listener who said he served in the same army regiment as me in North Africa during 1945-47. "So you are still plugging ol' Bing" was the opening sentence. The letter brought back lots of memories and made me realise that 1990 represents my forty-fifth year of Bing activities.

Early last August, a letter arrived from my old friend Ernest Sutkowski. In the parcel was a number of the letters and postcards he had received from the listeners of his weekly Crosby broadcasts on station WRTN. It was fascinating to read so many messages and requests. Keep up the good work Ernest.

Speaking of letters I have received, one arrived recently which was partially incomplete. As it may

have been from one of the members, I thought I would reply here. The letter asked if Bing had recorded a song entitled "An Old Fashioned Christmas". The answer is yes, it having been made with Les Brown and the Jack Halloran Singers on 8 September 1971. The recording was made as a demo, and the master given was DL 187. [The track was part of the Daybreak "A Time To Be Jolly" sessions — Ed]

Before closing I would once again like to urge all members to put their best foot forward via the media and chase up the re-issue of Bing's recordings. We really do need to be on a part with the other organisations who do everything to push their idols.

Finally, and as I have done for so many years, may I wish all members and their families the very best for Christmas 1990 and a Happy New Year.

Leslie Gaylor

Once again, our resident film buff, Keith Parkinson gives us a double helping of

CELLULOID CROSBY:

BING IN THE EIGHTIES

In the past the pages of 'BING' have been used to chart the use of the Crosby voice on the soundtrack of cinema films. It is not intended to repeat the information previously published but to provide a brief checklist of films noted during the past decade. In addition, two films released towards the end of the 'eighties now have their first mention in these pages. The following checklist is restricted to movies made between 1980 and 1989. All the films in the list have received a full mention in earlier issues of this magazine.

Year	Film Title	Bing Crosby Vocal
1982	Pennies From Heaven	Did You Ever See A Dream Walking
1982	Frances	Love Is So Terrific (w The Andrew Sisters)
1983	A Christmas Story	Jingle Bells
		It's Beginning To Look Like Christmas
		Santa Claus Is Coming To Town
1984	Racing with the Moon	Moonlight Becomes You
1985	A Nightmare on Elm Street Part 2: Freddy's Revenge	Did You Ever See A Dream Walking
1986	Tough Guys	Don't Get Around Much Anymore
1987	Radio Days	Pistol Packin' Mama

The two most recent films to receive a U.K. release which make use of Bing's singing are:

SOMEONE TO LOVE (1987). All of the films directed by Henry Jaglom are quirky, but "Someone To Love" is autobiographically so in that the film's leading man is Jaglom who himself plays a film maker. The film's underlying theme is loneliness and unrequited love. The "Monthly Film Bulletin's" reviewer wrote "The use of evocative songs like "Long Ago And Far Away" conjure a nostalgic "yearning for romantic times and distant places". It is Bing's Decca recording of that song which is used on the soundtrack to help to perfectly capture the mood in one of the film's introspective moments. This was the last film in which Orsen Welles appeared, acting as a sage, movie magician and elder statesman at intervals as the story unwinds.

When Harry met Sally (1989). The theme of this American film is that men and women cannot have sex and still be just friends. Harry (Billy Crystal) and Sally (Meg Ryan) both graduate in 1977. They meet again in 1982 and 1987. It is the second re-union which sees the relationship between the two strengthening and the lengthy sequence embraces the Christmas/New Year festivities of 1987 and 1988. "Winter Wonderland" by Ray Charles and "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas" by Bing set the seasonal scene by way of a musical backdrop which results in the inevitable Hollywood happy ending. The brief plot line may give the impression of this being a rather sleazy picture, whereas it is a charming light comedy.

The use of hit songs from the past is a shorthand way for film-makers to quickly establish a sense of period. It is also an effective way to indicate the musical tastes of the main characters. In the 1990s I will continue to cover all the films released in this country which contain a Bing vocal.

THE A - Z OF BING'S MOVIES

AT YOUR COMMAND *(Song)* Bing sings the song over the radio on the Mack Sennett featurette "I Surrender Dear." It has special meanings for Marion Sayers, who has been kissed by Bing earlier in an episode of mistaken identity. When she hears the song she is re-united with Bing and a happy ending is

provided in the last two minutes of this one-reeler. The 1946 compilation "Road to Hollywood" also featured the song. Bing composed the song with ex-Rhythm Boy Harry Barris and established tunesmith Harry Tobias.

ATES, ROSCOE (1892-1962). Pronounced R-R-R-Roscoe Ates, because Ates' movie career was built round his comic stutter combined with his rubber face and bulging eyes. In "Hollywood on Parade No. 4" (1933) Bing is given the opportunity to sing "Boo-Boo-Boo" to girls on exercise machines because Ates' stuttering puts them out of rhythmic-sync. His other bit in a Crosby picture was as the horse cab driver who over-charges in "Birth Of The Blues" (1941).

Ates entered films in 1929 following 15 years as a concern violinist with stage and vaudeville experience. He put his comic talents to work in Hollywood mainly as a sidekick to screen cowboys, although bigger budget efforts included "Alice in Wonderland" (1933) and "The Errand Boy" (1961), which was also his last film. He was in three serious dramas which proved he could turn his hand to less obvious comic parts: "Gone with the Wind (1939), "Chad Hanna" (1940) and "Come next Spring" (1956).

AUER, MISCHA (1905 - 1967). An alphabetical coincidence places Mischa after our previous entrant and serves to highlight a number of similarities. Both entered films in the late 'twenties, both were regarded as comic character actors and both made capital of a possible thyroid condition which gave them bulging eyes. Auer's maternal grandfather was also a violinist and it was he who brought him to the States from Russia in 1920.

His only Crosby film was "East Side Of Heaven" (1939), when he was fourth billed as Nicky, Bing's friend and room-mate. It was a cue from Auer that provides Bing with the opportunity to sing "That Sly Old Gentleman" to Baby Sandy, because Auer's attempt at a Russian song has the opposite effect as a lullaby. Around this time Auer was also a guest on Bing's weekly 'Kraft Music Hall' broadcasts.

Mischa Auer appeared in more than sixty Hollywood films before settling in Europe in the late forties. His first truly memorable part was in the 1936 "My Man Godfrey" which won him an Oscar nomination and bigger supporting roles. His long, sad face and droll delivery enlivened such films as "Three Smart Girls (1937), "You Can't Take It With You" (1938), "Destry Rides Again" (1939), "Hellzapoppin" (1941), "Lady In The Dark" (1944) and "Brewster's Millions" (1945). The European movies were no match for the Hollywood comedy production line and only "Mr. Arkadin" (1955) remains in the memory.

AUF WIEDERSEHEN MY DEAR *(Song)*. In the early Thirties Bing sang this Milton Ager, Ed Nelson, Al Hoffman, Al Goodhart composition in two shorts. In the Mack Sennett featureette "Blue Of The Night" it wraps up his last appearance in a night club and in "Hollywood on Parade No. 2" he sings it to Gracie Allen on learning she is married to George Burns. The "Blue Of The Night" sequence was re-used in the 1949 compilation "Down Memory Lane".

AVALON BOYS. Only rarely do we find a Crosby film song not issued commercially. Such a one is "There'll Always Be A Lady Fair", a Cole Porter song used in the 1936 "Anything Goes" movie. Bing sings this with the Avalon Boys and what superb harmonies ensue. The Avalon Boys were a quartet led by Chill Wills, a Hollywood character actor whose only Bing movie link is here.

AVE MARIA *(Song)*. One of those lump in the throat compositions that hits the soundtrack when the going gets simultaneously serious and sentimental. Written by Franz Schubert and sung by Father O'Malley and Genevieve Linden (Bing and Rise Stevens) in "Going My Way" (1944). The Robert Mitchell Boys choir add a suitably celestial choral backing.

AYLMER, SIR FELIX (1889 - 1979) Actor in Bing's only British movie, "The Road To Hong Kong" (1962). This oh so typically English actor played the Grand Lama in the sequence set in Tibet where Crosby and Hope are sent for a memory potion.

Aylmer had distinguished himself as a stage actor in the twenty or so years preceeding his film debut in "The Wandering Jew" (1933). His first love remained the theatre even when he was in demand for well written character parts. He also wrote plays and adapted several plays for the cinema. His main cinematic output has been in British productions, some of the better known being: "Victoria The Great" (1938), "Night Train to Munich" (1940), "The Life And Death Of Colonel Blimp" (1943), "Henry V" (1944), "The Way Ahead" (1945), "The Wicked Lady" (1945), "Hamlet" (1948), "So Long At The Fair" (1950), "Quo Vadis" (1951, "Anastasia" (1956), "Separate Tables" (1958) and "Exodus" (1960). The last four were made in the U.S.A. His last picture was the British made "Decline and Fall" in 1968.

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

As if John Bignell's radical views about "White Christmas" were not enough, we now have another stalwart, STAN WHITE asking:

WAS BING CROSBY TOO FAMOUS?

I think Bing Crosby was too famous because at the height of his career, which spanned many years, he was so universally well liked that his very name created his own publicity, films, radio and records that provided fame for him. There were none of Bing's actual radio programmes broadcast in the U.K. — that did not stop his voice being heard in every "Family Favourites" programme, plus every other type of programme which used records; alongside of this were the 15 minute "Bing Sings" programmes which were broadcast on a regular basis for many years by the BBC, and made up of selections from his commercially available 78s. Later, Radio Luxembourg picked up this programme and kept it going to the dawn of the 1960s.

It was Crosby in the cinemas, Crosby on the radio, Crosby in the juke boxes, Crosby with his huge section in every record shop. To quote Benny Green, "Crosby so utterly permeated every strand of every day life in those times that there was hardly a household in the west without at least one of his recordings. It says something for his astonishing effect as an item of social history that you could no more proceed without him in the early thirties than do without a pair of pyjamas or a hair brush, you might indeed get by without any of these little comforts, but that would be because of poverty — not the decision that Crosby, pyjamas and hair brushes were undesirable". That sort of fame kept going for Bing right through to the end of the 1940s, perhaps to 1954 and the film, "White Christmas". The 1956 film "High Society" is a different matter, Louis Armstrong and His All-Stars were riding high with world tours and huge record sales, Frank Sinatra was back on top of his form, Grace Kelly was about to become a 'Royal', so that the film had everything going for it, although by then, there were the first signs of change in Bing's voice.

The Crosby Clan, who numbered countless millions worldwide, had it all their own way for near on twenty years. Bing could do no wrong, and I repeat that his very name created its own publicity. Because he was so famous, the Crosby Clan took that fame for granted. Those days are now long gone.

From the middle 1950s onwards, popular music began to change and what was once called 'popular' gave way to 'pop', not all bad but very different and certainly no longer the music of those Bing Crosby Years. I remember Cliff Richard saying that when he started singing, he just had to give the youngsters something different to the Bing Crosby sounds enjoyed by his parents and grandparents! Different it was, and as far as Cliff is concerned, he has survived in luxury and fame long enough to prove his point. However Cliff and his contemporaries became the subjects for publicity and promotion which Bing and his contemporaries were never given, partly because of television and huge outdoor pop concerts were virtually unheard of in their day. Whether Bing would have relished a huge outdoor concert with thousands upon thousands of people in the audience is difficult to say, probably not, but Al Jolson would have, with all of that amplification and a huge audience, he would certainly have belted it out to them; perhaps with The Andrews Sisters alongside, Bing would have too, but it was not to be, all of that is for a different sort of artiste and sound.

The trouble is, even today, Bing's Clan still wallow in the mistaken idea that he is still as famous as ever, and that whenever they hear him on the radio, it is because the presenters automatically programme him . . . don't you believe it, the youngest people with a memory of Bing as a 'live' performer with new albums being released, are now in their twenties, and their memory would be of an old man. The people who remember the younger Bing who was always in the cinemas, always on the radio, and always with a huge section of 78s in every record shop, are now mainly in their 50s upwards, and apart from some of the older presenters on national radio, there are but few on radio who know much about him! And yet all agree that radio is the one sure way of keeping Bing going and perhaps even attracting some younger listeners, and by that I mean in some numbers.

Leslie Gaylor, Ernest Sutkowski, and a few more in which I include myself, keep writing to the radio presenters to ask them to include Bing in their programmes, if needs be we supply them with the information about latest releases, and quite often, we supply the albums whether on LP or CD . . .

I am aware that a number of people think we are mad, and that the radio people should find their own records, or have the sense to play Bing anyway, but it no longer works like that. I'll say this, compared to the efforts made by the Frank Sinatra followers to have his records broadcast, the Crosby Clan are a lazy lot. Of course, as noted in the letter from Ron McCormick in the "BING" 95 issue, it was in the past difficult to get into print on this subject, or those related to it. Things have changed and I hope that people can be encouraged to write to their favourite programmes on national and local radio, and ask to hear Bing. If you have to give them a hand by giving or loaning a record, then do it, at the least you will be allowing a few thousand people to hear Bing, and if it is a national radio programme, then a few million people will hear him in all probability depending upon the time of day, but certainly a lot, and that is the way to keep Bing's name alive and his songs heard.

As noted by Ernest Sutkowski recently, "Bing really does not have an organisation or company working to keep his work alive. Bing, himself, was undeniably a powerful force while he was still with us and yet he needed his fans then as does any performer." Ernest also said, "To have a parochial attitude regarding radio's treatment of Bing is to overlook the fact that the various Bing Crosby clubs are the only Crosby promoters left."

The plain facts are, we can keep Bing going providing people make the effort to make sure he is heard on the radio. To do that you just have to write to the radio stations and the personalities who present the programmes. Just talking to ourselves through the pages of the various Crosby publications is no use at all. By writing to the radio stations worldwide, Bing then takes to the air, and is heard by countless people who enjoy his songs, although they will never join a club and read these pages. Very often, as has been proven, after hearing Bing, some of that great public out there, then write in themselves for a Bing song they can remember. If you can't be bothered to write to a radio station for Bing, then please don't bother to write to this magazine to complain about what I have said. Bing needs your help, now.

Lionel's Lines

One of the real pleasures of record collecting occurs when you finally come across the rare item which has sat patiently at the top of your "wanted" list for many a long year. The same sensation occurs when you meet a fellow collector for the first time, feeling that through the medium of his letters and articles, he is already an old friend. So, it was a bonus to have an opportunity at the Leeds gathering to meet LIONEL PAIRPOINT face to face and remind him that his column for BING was due within the week. As ever, Lionel hit the deadline and not only provides us with an interesting profile of a composer indelibly linked with Bing, but also a review of a book which has attracted quite some attention, "As Thousands Cheer". Over to you Lionel.

SAY IT WITH MUSIC (AND WORDS!)

Some years ago, I was asked to write the sleeve note for an album entitled 'Music! Music! Music!' and I closed the piece (quite appositely, I smugly thought, at the time) with ". . . but let's not overlook the words, the tools of the vocalist's trade . . . "

I have always been fascinated by the artful synthesis of words and music that creates the popular song and I venture to suggest that had Bing 'boo-booed' or 'scatted' his way through all of his two thousand sides, he would not have had the number of admirers that he still has, today.

The dictionary definition of 'song' is, 'a poem set to music' but most publications on the subject give short shrift to the lyric writers. The book " 'You Must Remember This . . . ' (Popular Songwriters 1900-1980)", is unpleasantly condescending with its casual reference — 'Dietz, Howard see Schwarz, Arthur'; 'Dubin, Al see Warren, Harry; 'Gordon, Mack see Revel, Harry' or, a little closer to home, 'Burke, Johnny, see Van Heusen, Jimmy'!

Although I would not be prepared to agree, wholeheartedly, with Irving Caesar ('Tea For Two', 'Swanee', 'Just A Gigolo' etc.) who said, "What is a real lyric writer? He's a fellow who can't help singing and he sings through his words. A poet or a versifier — they must be satisfied to write their words down. But a lyricist — he's a minstrel! . . . Believe me, if I could write music instead of lyrics, I'd be glad to, because it's so much easier. Why, comnposers, even the great ones, ought to get down on their knees every day and say, 'Thank God I'm a composer — it's so easy. I can write a tune every hour of the day or night but thank God I don't have to write the words!' " I do, however, find a certain affinity with Dorothy Hammerstein who, on becoming so irritated when hearing the song, repeatedly introduced as, "Jerome Kern's 'Ol' Man River' " was stung into making the icy remark, "Jerome Kern wrote 'Dah, Dah, Dee Dum' — my *husband* wrote 'Ol' Man River' "!

Being a stickler for giving credit where credit is due, no one is more aware than I of the jawbreaking possibilities in, "De Sylva, Brown & Henderson's, 'The Best Things In Life Are Free' " or even, "Turk, Crosby & Ahlert's, 'Where The Blue Of The Night Meets The Gold Of The Day' "! So, it affords some vocabular relief to mention, "Irving Berlin's, 'Blue Skies' " as, apart from some early collaborations, Berlin was always responsible for both ingredients. Considered to be less witty than Cole Porter and without the concert hall aspirations of Gershwin, he relied upon the simplicity of his words, set to easily hummable tunes, to maintain a position in the front rank of songwriters for seven decades.

He had taken his first, probationary steps into show business before Bing Crosby was born but the paths of their careers were to touch, on many occasions, often to mutual advantage.

Bing appeared in four films which had been scored by Irving Berlin. The only one that I may have to remind you of might be 'Reaching For The Moon'. The film was originally intended to be a musical, for which Berlin had written five songs but the only vocal used was 'When The Folks High Up Do The Mean Low Down', sung by Bing in his 'walk on' part. This would be a good moment to refer to the Philco Radio Times broadcast of 7th May 1947 in which Irving Berlin featured as Bing's guest. A portion of the dialogue runs thus:

B.C. "The first tune I ever mangled in a picture was written by you"

I.B. "I don't know what song or what picture you're talking about"

B.C. "I just sang the song off-stage (and off key, I might add!) — In my first screen effort, I never did get in front of the camera"

Any ideas out there? Or was this just an example of scriptwriter's licence?

Three famous People . . . This happy picture was taken on the set of Paramount's lavish new musical, "White Christmas," the first production in the company's revolutionary new process, VistaVision. The three famous people seen here are Don Hartman, executive producer at the Paramount studios; Rosemary Clooney, who co-stars in the film with Bing Crosby, Danny Kaye and Vera-Ellen; and Irving Berlin, who wrote the music for the picture

At the time of Berlin's centenary in 1988, a review was undertaken to establish how many of his songs, Bing Crosby had recorded. Without reference, I believe there were around 60 titles but I wonder, if when he produced one of his best efforts in the Sixties, for the Longines Symphonette set, was Bing surprised to discover that he had 'missed out', previously, on such 'standards' as, 'Always', 'Remember', 'What'll I Do' and 'All Alone'? And it transpired that no less than a quarter of the 36 tracks that he taped for this album were Berlin songs. Or, had he been attempting, for some time, to rectify some of these omissions, bearing in mind that six titles included on the unissued 'Sing-along' records?

We are able to listen to a further small legacy of Berlin's tunes from Bing's various radio series — 'When The Midnight Choo-Choo Leaves For Alabam' '; 'Someone Else May Be There'; 'Tell Me, Little Gypsy'; 'Any Bonds Today?' and 'Call Me Up Some Rainy Afternoon' — all from Kraft Music Hall. A duet, with Judy Garland, of the last song was featured in the Chesterfield series, together with, 'Let's Take An Old-Fashioned Walk' and 'You're Just In Love' (another duet with Judy Garland and incongruously but nonetheless welcome, a version with Louis Armstrong). The same song turned up on General Electric, this time with Rosemary Clooney. From Philco Radio Time we can hear, 'I Want To Go Back To Michigan' (with Beatrice Lillie); 'A Pretty Girl Is Like a Melody' (with Al Jolson); 'I Got The Sun In The Morning' and 'I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm' which was repeated in his last regular radio series with Buddy Cole, along with 'A Man Chases A Girl'.

Irving Berlin was said to be 'a creator of anthems' and there seems to be ample evidence to convince us — 'Easter Parade' is one of the ten most popular and financially profitable songs of all time; In the 1950's, 'God Bless America' was chosen in a national poll as the most famous patriotic song in America and there was even a movement, set in motion, for it to replace, 'The Star Spangled Banner'; How many bathing beauties have teetered along the catwalk to the strains of, 'A Pretty Girl Is Like A Melody'? What more perfect 'curtain' song than, 'There's No Business Like Show Business' and how would we get through December without 'White Christmas'?

A weighty tome could be written about this song, alone — The overwhelming mass of (sometimes conflicting) statistics, covering sales and recordings — A cantor's son, writing a song about a Christmas festival — The colossal conceit of the composer, "Not only is it the best song *I* ever wrote, it's the best song anybody ever wrote"! — The mental picture that we have of Bing, removing his pipe from his mouth and saying, "You don't have to worry about this one Irving" and of the day he was scheduled to sing 'White Christmas' before the cameras, when Berlin was apprehended, crouching behind the set, reluctant to 'let go' of his precious song — The disappointment of the song-pluggers when they first saw the sheet music, complaining that only Crosby would be able to pronounce the word 'Christmasses' with the necessary ease and their further arguments that they were being swindled out of a verse when the composer instructed that this should be cut from his song on all future copies — Berlin's chagrin, when, always ready to sue parodists, he discovered the troops of North Africa were singing, 'I'm Dreaming Of A White Mistress' — His dislike of versions of the song by Elvis Presley and the British group, Darts (maybe because the sheet music suggests, 'Slowly, with expression'!) — And finally, the Oscar ceremonies of 1942, when, self-effacing, as ever, he presented the Best Song Award to himself, with the words, "This goes to a nice guy; I've known him all my life".

I didn't know Mr. Berlin well enough to vouch for the veracity of this statement but I can say, without hesitation, that he was certainly a guy who could write nice songs.

To the day he died, Irving Berlin refused to allow any biography or bio-pic of his life. Alexander Woollcott managed to write one in 1925 (little did he know that there were another 64 years to go!) but now the definitive volume has been published by Hodder & Stoughton. A 'must' for any student of popular song and from which some of the foregoing material has been drawn — Make a note of 'As Thousands Cheer' by Lawrence Bergreen.

The best testimonial that I can offer to Irving Berlin (and his contemporaries), is to quote the chorus of a song by the young, soul singer Terence Trent D'Arby:

'The thorns outnumber the petals on the rose
And the darkness amplifies the sound of printer's ink
On propaganda page
That will rule your life and fuel my rage'

Well, you've got the words — All together now! — Unless, of course, you prefer 'Blue Skies'.

Lionel Pairpoint.

YOU SING THE HITS OF BING CROSBY — Pocket Song Cassettes 354-355

Just moved back to Vancouver from Hawaii. There I was invited to record two albums as a Bing (sorta) soundalike. Appropriately "Sweet Leilani" was one of the numbers. It was a great experience for me. Tough part was being obliged to sing in the original keys. As a bass baritone I found it very difficult to reach for the high ones in such numbers as Easy To Remember, June In January and I'm An Old Cowhand. But that's not the important part. The cassette albums feature the original backgrounds of Bing's hallmark sounds enabling Crosby admirers of all sizes and shapes to sing to those wonderful backings on their own. With or without hat and pipe, as soloists.

I appear on Track A as guide singing voice in what I hope is a hint of the Crosby tradition. That's provided to help singers know when to come in or lean back.

Enclosed is a copy of the album cover, cheek to cheek. They're attractively packaged and contain lyric sheets. You may wish to draw the availability of the

two cassette albums to the notice of readers. They're available at music stores but not generally in record shops. Is this a class act or what!? My address is readily available to ICC readers as: 945 Marine Dr., Windsor Bldg. 504, W. Vancouver, Canada, V7T, 1A8.

Sheldon O'Connell

Pocket Songs PS 355
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To the place where Louie dwells
To the dear old tempo bar we love so well
See the Whiffenpoofs assembled
With their glasses raised on high
And the magic of their singing casts its spell.
Yes, the magic of their singing
Of the songs we loved so well
Shall be wafting a-borning and the rest
We will serenade our Louie
While our laughin' voice shall last
Then we'll pass and be forgotten with
the rest.
We're poor little lambs who have lost our way
Baa baa baa
We're little black sheep who have gone astray
Baa baa baa.
Sing two times
Gentlemen songsters off on a spree
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G-E Dealers' spectacular showdown gives you this dramatic proof

BING IN ULTRA VISION

The advertisement opposite comes from a 1950s National Geographic magazine, and tells us of the wonders of 'Ultra-Vision". Somehow it doesn't seem to have quite lasted the pace. There is however good news for lovers of Bing on video. The days when British and American videos, whilst using identical tape formats but nevertheless exhibiting "irreconcilable differences" (to coin a phrase) are over. JVC have introduced the "J35", a machine which can play both PAL (in British) and NSTC (in America) videos in a manner so unbelieveably simple that you wonder how on earth it took so long. The J35 retails at around the £400 mark, but is available from some rental outlets, notably Visionhire (or is it Ultra-Vision?).

Malcolm Macfarlane takes over now, beginning with some truly original research.

BING AT THE BEEB

If you could look into the BBC's files, what would you find out about Bing? Well, Ken Crossland and I had that opportunity last July and this is what we discovered.

Firstly, by way of background, the BBC maintains a Written Archives Centre at Caversham, Reading to meet a growing interest in the history of broadcasting. The Centre holds about a hundred thousand contributor files relating to speakers, writers, artists, composers and entertainers engaged by the BBC plus files covering all types of programme. Details of scripts used are mainly held on microfilm as are many of the records giving the "Programmes-as-Broadcast" i.e. the log of output. Comprehensive indexes are held covering virtually all of the BBC's output in the UK. Amongst the vast amount of other material held are copies of the Radio Times in bound form from 1923 to date. Visits are made by appointment only.

Knowing where to start was a problem but we were fortunate in having Neil Somerville (Senior Assistant to guide us. Following an earlier telephone conversation, Neil had found the contributor file relating to Bing plus other related files for our perusal on arrival. The files do not contain anything beyond 1962 as it would not be appropriate for recent business matters relating to modern day personalities to be public knowledge. Bing's contributor file started in 1944 and here are the highlights which necessarily have had to be considerably abbreviated for use in BING.

August, 1944 — Memos from Maurice Gorham of the BBC to various sections of the organisation regarding Bing's visit to the UK and the broadcasts in which he was to participate. Many members will know that Bing first of all appeared in Variety Bandbox, then broadcast with the British Band of the AEF (under George Melachrino) and then with the American Band of the AEF (under Glenn Miller). He also took part in the opening of the Stage Door Canteen. The memo indicates that it was hoped that Bing would make a live appearance in "Rise and Shine" (broadcast on the AEFP between 0600 and 0800 hours!). It had been suggested that a 60 minute radio version of "Going my

Way" could be put together with Bing and in addition it was intended that he should make a brief appearance in Children's Hour. Neither of these last two ideas came to fruition. Bing had arrived in the UK on August 25th, 1944 and he left for France on September 1st. Apart from the BBC programmes, he also recorded with Glenn Miller at Bedford on 29th and 30th August. It is perhaps not surprising that he could not fit everything in.

The BBC had been very active in obtaining the services of visiting stars from the USA and in fact there is a separate file covering this aspect. An early reference to Bing on October 26th 1943 refers to his supplying linking dialogue for "the Bing Crosby/Anne Shelton series." I did not have enough time to research this matter. Presumably this series used gramophone records.

February, 1947 — Internal memo from the BBC's Variety Booking Manager. This man had met Len Barry, a Director of Archie Parnell & Co. Ltd. (and the agent for Sid Field) who had told him that Bing was coming to the UK in February 1948 to make a film with Sid Field. Bing was contracted to Philco to produce a weekly radio programme and Mr. Barry wondered whether this could be done with the co-operation of the BBC. It was suggested that Bing should broadcast for the BBC once a week during his stay in England. No fee would be payable to Bing but in return for his services he would be given recordings of the programme for use in the USA. Advertisements would be added in the USA.

This memo generated some correspondence about the possible problems with this suggestion but as we now know, the proposed film with Sid Field never materialised.

May, 1950 — Bing came to the UK for the second time and on this occasion it was to play in the British Amateur Golf Championship at St. Andrew's. The BBC attempted to have him on "In Town Tonight" on 27th May without success but they did get him to supply some linking comments for the programme of his records broadcast on the Light Programme on May 29th. Some of this dialogue was incidentally re-used in the Roy Plomley tribute to Bing which was broadcast in 1961. A fascinating letter dated 25th May, 1950 to Bing at the Dorchester Hotel from Norman Collins (Controller, Television) says:-

"Your extempore performance last night at the Dorchester was such a joy to everyone present that I feel bound to write this personal note to you to ask whether you could somehow or other spare a quarter of an hour to give the same amount of pleasure to the Television public.

In the ordinary way such arrangements would be made weeks beforehand. The object of this letter is to say that so far as Bing Crosby is concerned, the doors of Alexandra Palace are wide open for him whenever he could slip in, and either we could open the Service with you as an extra, and special, item, or if you are in London on Saturday night we would extend the heartiest invitation to you to appear in Rooftop Rendezvous as the top magnitude star surprise in this floor show."

What a pity that nothing came of this approach. Do any members know what Bing did at the Dorchester on May 24th?

September, 1952 — Bing came over here for the third time arriving on September 18th. He was on his way to France to shoot location scenes for "Little Boy Lost" but he arranged to play in a charity golf match at the Temple Club at Maidenhead on September 21st. This was the famous match with Bob Hope, Ted Ray and Donald Peers. The BBC files show that a recording car was sent to the course for interview purposes. Bing and Bob appeared in "In Town Tonight" on September 20th (broadcast on the Home Service) and received a nominal six guineas for their contribution which they asked the BBC to donate to the National Playing Fields Association.

May, 1953 — Bing was in France and the files indicate that he was persuaded by Tony Reddin of the Plaza Cinema, London to record a contribution to a BBC programme called "Star Spangled Salute". The recording was made on 14th May and after some dialogue with Ben Lyon, Bing then sang "Dear Hearts and Gentle People" to a piano accompaniment. The recording was used when the whole show was recorded on May 24th and the show itself was broadcast on June 4th in the Home Service as part of the Coronation celebrations. Bing was paid a fee of 50,000 francs which he authorised the BBC to pay to a French charity.

December, 1955 — Somewhat belatedly, someone had the bright idea of asking Bing to record a short spot on film for inclusion in "Music for You" which was to be transmitted on Christmas Day. Gigli was also filming a spot for use in the long-running show which older members may remember was introduced by Eric Robinson. Urgent cables back and forwards across the Atlantic were unsuccessful and eventually Bing himself cabled the BBC on December 18th saying that he had only just learned of the proposal. It was then too late for the recording to be made in time.

July to December, 1956 — An early start was made this time in readiness for a Christmas TV broadcast by Bing, again to be on "Music for You." The plan was for Bing to say a few words and then to sing "White Christmas" unaccompanied. Eric Robinson and his orchestra and choir were then to add the backing here in the UK. A nice letter duly arrived from Bing with an *audio* tape. The need for the contribution to be filmed had got lost in the correspondence! The tape contained a recently recorded version (for a radio show) of "White Christmas" together with a message. As far as I know, the audio tape was never used.

March, 1958 — The BBC were planning a massive tribute to Irving Berlin and it was decided that it was essential to have an artist such as Bing or Frank Sinatra to star in it. The BBC offered $10000 (then worth £3500) to Bing but he declined due to other commitments.

September, 1960 — Cecil Madden tried unsuccessfully to get Bing to be the guest celebrity on "What's my line". This was the show where the resident panel were blindfolded when the guest came on and they then had to guess his identity from questions. Often the guest would have to use a false voice to avoid detection and it would have been interesting to see how Bing would have dealt with this problem.

December, 1960 — Bing was asked to record a short message to be used at the end of a tribute to him which was to be broadcast in the Light programme on 26th December, 1960. He duly obliged, recording his contribution in the USA on 11th December, 1960. A payment of £100 was made to the National Playing Fields Association in lieu of a fee.

1961 — A lot of activity this year because Bing was in England filming "The Road to Hong Kong". He and Bob Hope (and their respective families) were sharing a house. On 9th August, 1961, Bing appeared on "In Town Today" and his "fee" consisted of golf balls! Much correspondence then took part about a show with Bill McGuffie and his quartet. The show was to be recorded at Shepperton Studios and Mr. McGuffie had obtained a written agreement from Bing (which was actually in the BBC file). Unfortunately the show fell through. Bing and Bob Hope did however agree to appear in "Picture Parade" and Bing's contract showing the nominal fee of £10.10.0 (which was then to go to charity) is on file. Bing and Bob duly filmed their contribution to the show on 19th October 1961. The show was introduced by Robert Robinson and was used to plug "The Road to Hong Kong". Bing and Bob sang "Teamwork" accompanied by Bill McGuffie. Cecil Madden's internal memo the next day read:-

"Many congratulations on achieving such an exciting special programme with Hope and Crosby for "Picture Parade", and at no cost for fees. To have them working a specially written script by Goodwin and singing together in our studios was an achievement we shall long remember. I will do my best to get the cover of the Radio Times with the special photographs when you use it.

Crosby feeling ill, and the worry of a substantial informal audience all added to a difficult day which was splendidly surmounted by all. Well done!"

Another memo commented that Bing was so poorly it was a wonder he had come at all. Bing certainly had the 'flu at some stage of his visit to England and his kidney stones were starting to give him pain again but the precise nature of his indisposition is not identified on file. The show was eventually transmitted on 3rd April, 1962 to coincide with the provincial release of the Road film here.

There is an amusing memo on file dated 9th October 1961 regarding the payment of fees to Hope and Crosby for other proposed shows. Bing had been asked about fees and said "You are not sponsored are you" and on being assured that the BBC were not, he said, "Well, give me a 1/-". The BBC producer replied that the BBC did not like taking anything for nothing and Bing responded "Well pay something to charity". At a later date, the Head of Light Entertainment was in conversation with Bob Hope about a show and Hope queried the fee. The BBC man felt rather on the spot and shot out a quick "£250". The disparity between the two fees became apparent to another BBC official who then telephoned Hope and put his cards on the table. Hope said that this shouldn't cause any difficulty because after all, "you see that fellow Crosby is not as well-known as I am". With Crosby and Hope sharing the same house at the time, it was eventually decided to pay Bing £250 as well!

Having gone through the main files featuring Bing, I

referred to various files on microfilm and to early listings of BBC programmes. In the 1930's, the BBC radio programmes appeared to consist of Church services, chamber music and news broadcasts. There was very little in the way of light entertainment and the first reference to Bing is on Saturday April 20th 1935 when the following programme was broadcast:-

"5.30 p.m. **Six Hours Back** (equivalent to Five Hours Back pending the introduction in the USA of Summer Time)
G. Stoll and his orchestra: Bing Crosby (crooner): from Hollywood USA"

This was obviously a Woodbury show and it must have been on disc as the shows were broadcast live in the States on Tuesdays. Presumably the commercials were removed. The next reference to Bing is on 8th February 1937 when in a show called "Entertainment Parade" he is billed as singing a song from the new film "Pennies from Heaven". The programme also covers the opening of the Gaumont Cinema, Haymarket so perhaps the first film shown there was "Pennies from Heaven".

The BBC has copies of the scripts of many shows on microfilm and I was interested to see that the files contain details of three of Bing's Kraft shows. These were broadcast on the Forces programme in 1943 and no doubt they were the edited versions used throughout the World for forces broadcasts. Other scripts which caught my eye were:-

24/2/51 "Salute to Bing Crosby" — broadcast in the Light programme at 9 p.m. This was the CBS tribute on the 20th anniversary of Bing's solo career which many of us will have on tape. (Bing sings 'I Surrender Dear' at the end). There was an assessment of the recorded programme by the BBC technicians on file and I noticed that Mary Martin's spot in which she sang a song from 'South Pacific' had to be deleted from the show as the songs had not yet been released in the UK. The show had been offered to the BBC by Paramount Pictures and it had to be cleared by the Musicians Unions before it could be used.

17/4/52 Bing Crosby in 25 years of song — A half-hour tribute to Bing broadcast at 2 p.m. in the Home Service. Introduced by Philip Vickers with script written by none other than the well known Brian Rust.

14/3/61 & 21/3/61 The Bing Crosby Story — A tribute to Bing broadcast on the Home Service in two separate 1 hour segments. The programmes were recorded in February. Narrated by Roy Plomley, these

scripts were very interesting indeed as the last minute manuscript alterations showed how adjustments were made to get the running time just right. The script included the information that Bing was 5' 9· tall and that he weighed 11 stones 11 pounds (165 pounds). I should not have thought that Bing was that heavy at that time. He never seemed to regain his weight after his kidney problems and often he had a very gaunt look about him in later years.

20/7/70 & 27/7/70 The Story of a Star — The Bing Crosby story narrated by Robin Boyle and broadcast on Radios 1 and 2.

The final details I examined on microfilm were the lists of the TV programmes featuring Bing. Most of these had already been identified as part of the research being undertaken by the ICC to prepare a listing of Bing's TV career but there were some useful additions. Bing was interviewed at the Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Championships on 30th June 1965, in the Derby Grandstand on 7th June 1967 and at Royal Ascot on 16th June 1976. None of these had been picked up before by our researchers.

The Written Archives Centre was an absolutely fascinating place. I had the impression that we had hardly scratched the surface, yet we have added considerably to our knowledge of Bing and his career. Our sincere thanks must therefore go out to Neil Somerville and his colleagues for their help. We very gratefully acknowledge the information provided by the BBC in making this article possible.

Many members will have recollections about some of the shows mentioned. Why not drop me a line?

Malcolm Macfarlane

TRADING POST

Entries are free for all items of Crosbyana and there is a nominal charge of £1 for non-Crosby advertisements. All items are printed in good faith and we cannot accept responsibility for any dissatisfaction arising from transactions undertaken as a result of these entries.

Please send all advertisements to the Assistant Editor, Malcolm Macfarlane, whose address is given at the beginning of the magazine.

Etty Gits, Izegemstraat 60, 4826 BG Breda, Holland.

Wants to buy the following LP's:-
"How the West was won" (2 LP set), "High Tor", "Goldilocks", "Holiday in Europe", "Beloved Hymns" and "Bing in Paris"

Etty is also looking for good quality copies of PAL videotapes of Bing's TV shows and would like to correspond with other members and swap cassette tapes etc.

Alan Chadwick, 3 Mortimer Close, Hartley Wintney, Nr. Basingstoke, Hants RG27 8EL.

Wanted:-

1. LP's "Le Bing" and "Holiday in Europe" (stereo version) in excellent condition.

2. Any audio recording sessions in good reproduction.

Offered in exchange a 1 hour video (VHS but no sound) in colour of Bing golfing at Turnberry and at Sunningdale 1975/6. Bob Hope is also included. This material was originally personally shot cine in excellent quality which has been directly transferred to video. SAE for replies.

(Asst. Editor: Alan has also mentioned that he would be happy to transfer to video, free of charge, any Bing cine material (Sup. 8, Std 8) which members may have. SAE to Alan for further details.)

John Marshall, 39 Kings Rd., Teddington, Middlesex TW11 0QD.

As seen in the VARIETY report elsewhere in BING, John's long hot summer, bent over various recorders paid off with a marvellous result. 1991 should easily echo this, thanks to him now placing before you a genuinely rare item that deserves our 100% support and interest.

"Speaking of Bing" — features 60 intriguing minutes in which Jerry Perchesky interviews a relaxed and informative Al Rinker (Jan. 19, 1978) followed by 26 minutes of Bill Osborne (BCHS) getting down to brass tacks with Bob Crosby and truly taking us behind the scenes of his interesting history, with some lovely Bing anecdotes (May 18, 1985). Cost (for UK members) £4 inc. P. & P. $10 by air for USA.

(Asst. Editor: I have heard an advance copy of this cassette which has to be a "must" for anyone who wants to hear about the start of Bing's career from a man who was there. After "The Hollow Man" and "Moonshiners", it is interesting to have Al Rinker's own version which hopefully is far nearer the truth. Bob Crosby makes some telling comments too.)

Philip Reeves, Coxwalls Cottage, Ash End, Henstridge Templecombe, Somerset, BA8 0PN (Tel: 0963-63497)

FOR SALE:-

1. Boxed Set of 3 LP's "10th Anniversary Collection" (played only the once).

2. VHS Video tapes containing "Rhythm on th Range" and "Waikiki Wedding", "Big Broadcast of 1936" and "Mississippi".

3. Record albums of Bing and other stars of his period. SAE for details.

Arthur Blood, 597 Osmaston Road, Derby DE2 8NE.

Arthur writes to us to remind us that he still has a few strips left of his very successful Xmas stamps of Bing. Cost for a strip of 20 is £2 (including postage) with all profits going to the 1991 Variety Fund. Arthur also offers the special Variety stamps at the same price.

F.B. (Wig) Wiggins, 5608 North 34th Street, Arlington, Virginia 22207, USA.

"If anyone has a spare copy of AH 136 "Inchabod" (The Legend Of Sleepy Hollow/Rip Van Winkle)" that they would be willing to swap for several of Bing's American CD's or LP's (or those of any other artist, for that matter), please ask them to get in touch with me."

John Wall, 4 Hustler Court, Mount Waverley, Melbourne, 3149, Victoria, Australia

John has many Bing LP's for sale including several in the Bing's Hollywood series (Pennies From Heaven, Pocketful of Dreams, The Road Begins, Easy To Remember, Accentuate The Positive). He would be happy to trade any 15 of the LP's he has for sale in exchange for "Only Forever" (BING 6 or equivalent) and "Drifting And Dreaming" (FL 30-235 or equivalent). SAE to John for details please.

Stan Woodford, 6 Mariam Gardens, Hornchurch, Essex RM12 6QA (Tel: 04024-45049)

Stan has VHS videos of Bing items on offer and a further song compilation which may be of interest. SAE to Stan for list please.

Renee Chester, 53 Park Crescent, Eastwood, Nottingham NG16 3DS

is anxious to obtain good quality videos of Bob Hope's TV Tribute to Bing ("Bob Hope On The Road With Bing") and "Merry Christmas Fred — From The Crosbys" Renee also tells us in passing that Paramount are to release "Top O' The Morning" for US TV within the next 12-24 months.

Gordon Hooper, 54 Devonport Road, Worthing, Sussex BN11 2SW. Tel: 0903 33378.

I have for sale **mint** copies of Bing's 1935 film "Mississippi". These are taken from a master recorded from the satellite network, "Filmnet".

In order to recoup the outlay made in purchasing a de-coder specifically for the purposes of recording this film, I am looking to sell copies of the film to ICC members. Price to include postage and packing is £10. There is no upper limit to the number of members who can purchase copies although orders will not be despatched until 24 orders, with payment have been received. In the event that less than 24 orders are received, cheques will be returned.

(Editor: This is a remarkable capture by Gordon, and offers us respite from years of watching inferior copies of one of Bing's most historic movies. We hope that sufficient members will take up Gordon's offer.)

There are a number of specialist record shops who cater for Bing fans and many of us have dealt with the following:-

Ray Purslow,
The Record Centre,
45 Loveday Street,
Birmingham 4
(Tel: 021-359-7399)

Tower Records,
1 Piccadilly Circus
London W1
(Tel: 071-439-5000)

Both concerns provide a mail order service and are well recommended. We recently received details of a shop in Brighton which has extensive stocks of Bing LP's and 78's. The address is:-

Vinyl Demand,
46 Sydney Street,
Brighton,
East Sussex
BN1 4EP
(Tel: 0273-608806)

The proprietor mentions that he has 200 78's in mint condition (which he is selling for 50p. each) and 180 mint LP's (selling between £3 and £6 each). We have no personal experience of this concern and we must leave individual members to deal with this information as they wish.

One Sweet Letter From You

Malcolm Macfarlane as Assistant Editor deals with general correspondence with members. Malcolm will be very pleased to hear from members and his address is given at the beginning of the magazine.

Stan White, 57 Stanley St., Rothwell, Kettering, Northants NN14 2EA

. . . Larry Kiner makes some good points in his letter (BING 95 page 4) which does in a way reflect a concern of my own about the future of the Bing Crosby scene worldwide. . . . So many of the same titles are being re-issued in album compilations of Bing's recording copyright expired material, whilst other tracks are being totally ignored. I suggest that a Trust should be registered, which would then raise money to gradually have all of Bing's recordings restored by the CEDAR process (which is already much improved over the system used on the Reader's Digest set). From the digital masters, the material could either be released through the Crosby clubs (maybe via Larry Kiner) or through an arrangement with firms such as Pickwick, to make commercial use of it. If the Crosby organisations do not do something positive, then the future is beginning to look bleak, because the major companies are just not interested in doing much about music which sells to the over 30's.

. . . it pleases me to see some support for Benny Green, who presents a very interesting programme each week, and features Bing a lot. So many times he makes no adverse comments about Bing, and nothing is said, but the moment he utters a few words which are not altogether in Bing's favour, all hell is showered upon him. . . . I'm just pleased that the club and magazine are doing so well, and for the fact that some names from the past are still contributing, but I have ended up wondering where Dot Hardiman and her daughter are, and whether Ted Laker would ever be interested in joining in again. Incidentally, Michael's 40th Anniversary article is excellent, and brings back so many memories. I wonder what happened to Ron Davies?

(Asst. Editor: Can anyone supply news of our old friends? I made contact with Ted Laker and members will see his reply below. Dot Hardiman is living in Boston, USA and Ken Crossland had a brief exchange of correspondence with her some months ago about Michael Holliday.

Ted Laker, 36 Villers Road, Southsea, Hants PO5 2HQ.

Thank you for your letter regarding the revamping of the Crosby scene - yes I used to be quite a stalwart in past versions of the British Crosby Club, attending London meetings and writing articles plus drawing some of the early covers for the magazine. It was all very enjoyable and no doubt if it hadn't been for certain things that happened, not always for the best, things would have just drifted along.

I'm still very interested in Bing and his records, they are to me a real tonic and streets ahead of stuff that passes for taste these days . . . but as for joining another club these days I don't think I'd like that after all this time. I wish you all the very best with your efforts to form a united front, and was sorry to hear of Frank Murphy's passing . . . Leslie Gaylor, Stan White and others seem indestructible.

(Asst. Editor: We are sending Ted a complimentary copy of BING to see if we can tempt him back into our ranks. Reverting to Stan White's letter above, he has now written direct to Pickwick about his suggestion that they issue remastered 78 material and he has received the following reply dated 17th September.)

John Howard Pickwick Group Plc, The Hyde Industrial Estate, The Hyde, London NW9 6JU.

Many thanks for your letter. Your idea is an interesting one but I do not think it is something Pickwick could do as we never consider a "Series" of albums, which Bing's remastered 78's, I would think, should be part of. Perhaps it is something you could approach Reader's Digest with for a possible Box set.

On the "Stage & Screen" set, I have re-approached MCA with a 1991 release in mind. I will keep you posted on developments.

(Asst. Editor: Pickwick have done well by us over recent years and let us hope that the "Stage & Screen" set comes off. I understand that the "Christmas with Bing" album will be available again this Xmas with wider distribution. Athough they were late with it last year, they sold 25000 units (i.e. CD/LP/Cassette) and it is expected to do well again.)

Dag Vagsas, Refstadsvingen 19, 0589 Oslo 5, Norway

As a fond member of BING, I just received issue number 95 of August 1990, and would very much like to correct a wrong statement about Mr. Fred Astaire, who was in the last "The A-Z of Bing's Movies."

It says that "his last film was the forgettable "Purple Taxi" (1977)". Wrong. He made his last film four years later, in 1981, and it was called "Ghost Story" (Universal) . . .

(Asst. Editor: Keith Parkinson tells me that Dag is absolutely right and he is grateful to him for putting the record straight. Well spotted Dag! We were interested to learn from Dag in a subsequent letter that he attended the Oslo concert given by Bing in 1977. There are a number of interesting anecdotes regarding this and Dag has kindly agreed to put together an article for use in a future edition of BING.

Members will recall the article by Ken Merry in BING 94 about Benny Green. Benny referred to this indirectly in his radio programme and we also received letters about it. The final word goes to Ken Merry.)

Ken Merry, 28 The Avenue, Bessacarr, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN4 5JX.

On the rocky road to one's late maturity, experience reveals that human communication is a mine-field and often it can be exemplified in the words of a song of some years ago, "Please Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood". I wish to make it clear that my sole aim in the article 'Greenise' was to create a few chuckles in the members while defending Bing. Fervently, I still hold the view as valid that if a public figure like Benny Green can use humour in an oblique manner then so can an unimportant citizen such as myself. With a name like mine, Merry, an occasional lapse from seriousness can be allowed.

The whole tone of the piece was humourous and this aspect reduces such things as prejudice and racialism to the absurdities that they are. No racial slur on Benny was intended and if the notion is examined in context, it will be noted that it was a play on the words Green as the title Greenise was a play on the words Green Eyes which is a song as well as a description of an occasional human characteristic, and the purpose was to place Benny's musical preferences in incongruous juxtaposition to some of this other musical preferences. In fact the piece was a humourous examination of some styles of presentation on Radio 2 as well as the styles of some disc jockeys. I hope the strongest 'legpull' was the final one on Frances Line, head of Radio 2, who was not friend to us when she rested Benny Green and Alan Dell. To date she has stolen a half hour of Alan Dell's Big Band Sound on Mondays.

Also, I wish to make it clear that I like Benny Green and David Jacobs and that I have listened to them at every opportunity for years. I like most of Benny's musical choices but I believe sincerely that I like Benny better than he likes Bing. This notion is not prejudice but based on years of listening to Benny's programme. Consciously or not, he seems to have a bias against Bing and I admire him in that despite this apparent bias he plays a lot of Bing's records.

Bob Lundberg, BINGthings Society, 4333 South 41st // 28, Tacoma, WA 98409, USA

The last issue of BING carried an article enquiring about the Woodbury shows of Bing. We do have many, although far from complete. To our knowledge this is the ***only*** *compilation of the shows anywhere. It began with an item in one of my writings. It stated Bing sang "I Wished On The Moon" on his radio show of June 11, 1935, then recorded the song August 14th, 1935, then shown in the film, "The Big Broadcast of 1936." This procedure was contrary to first being sung in a movie.*

It began with information from Tony Sponarich, living here in Tacoma. Howard Levine, a large collector residing in Coral Springs, Florida, enquired where I received the information. He was informed. I got the two together. Tony did more research feeding Howard what he had discovered, Howard did more research. The result was the first collection of any data on the Woodbury Shows.

That which is available contains the date of the show, songs and guests. We ran the series in our BING-things Society's BINGTALKS through the courtesy of Howard.

(Asst. Editor: I am in correspondence with Bob in order to obtain more information about the Woodbury series and further details will appear in BING in due course. The cost of BINGTALKS, which is published 4 times a year, is $15 to overseas subscribers and the magazine is sent by airmail. My cheque is on its way!)

Frans van de Kolff, Kooikersplaats 24, 7328 Ax Apeldoom, The Netherlands

. . . In my opinion, your new layout is quite successful. It's good to see introductions to some of the articles. Reg Bristo did that most of the time - together with his interruptions. I feel it 'binds' the magazine together and I would welcome an expansion of this policy, where warranted. I'm very pleased to see so many "old" familiar names contributing to the magazine - Ralph Harding, Fred Reynolds, Bert Bishop. That's a very good thing.

I think Larry Kiner's proposal of a kind of union of the Crosby groups around the world is a very sensible one and I hope it will get the support it deserves. The International Directory of Crosby Collectors and Appreciators is, in a way, a step towards this union, as it is a project to be set up in co-operation with other groups. I hope you will include as much information as possible on people's Crosby interests and collections. I can very well understand that some people might object against being included with their address - I don't think excluding addresses would really be a set-back to the directory, since (I think) it will only be a small minority who will object to inclusion of addresses. A problem you'll have to face in respect to address information is of course that it will "date" the directory very quickly. Have you thought about updates yet?

It's good to see so many new people are becoming members of the ICC and back to the last issue, other highlights for me included Derek Parkes' Collector's Club (this is a great asset to the magazine), the most informative "40 years of BING" retrospective and the review of "Moonshiners" - good to see 3 different opinions.

(Asst. Editor:- Thanks, Frans, some useful constructive comments there which we shall pick up. Next it is a pleasure to welcome new member Joe Groom to our pages.)

Joseph M. Groom, 3048 Bremen St., Columbus, Ohio 43224, USA

. . . I am not sure as to how personal you like to get with your members, but I am 37 years old, married with three children, ages 14, 10 and 4. I work at the Ohio State University here in Columbus, where I manage the research section of a large educational project which works with 1st grade children who have reading problems. My background is in developmental child psychology, and I mainly handle the computer data management and statistical analyses part of the project.

I became particularly interested in Bing about 4 years ago after reading a biography of his life. I was always aware of Bing, of course, and enjoyed his singing, but he was a fairly old man when people of our age were kids. He was synonymous with Christmas, but the bulk of his career had passed. It wasn't until I really became interested in his life and delved into it, that I began to realise his tremendous impact on the music of the 20th century. An impact, which I believe is vastly underrated by most of society.

I now read everything that I can get my hands on about Bing, and collect everything that I can find and afford.

. . . Again, thank you for welcoming me to ICC. I think that the plan to have Wig Wiggins handle the stateside money is a wise one. The whole nuisance of converting dollars to pounds is enough to keep some people from joining the ICC.

Doug Haywood, 14 Weaverthorpe Road, Woodthorpe, Nottingham NG5 4NB.

I have been a Crosby fan for 50 years, my first introduction to Bing was through listening to my brother's collection. I bought my first Crosby record in 1947 and I have been a collector since. Albeit a discriminating one. My latest acquisition is the CD "Bing - On The Sentimental Side" on the ASV label, 20 Thirties songs and it is excellent. When I purchased the CD, the shopkeeper showed me another one by Bing that had just come in and I bought that one as well.

Well it turned out that this other recording was a shocker. Totally unlistenable, it was returned next day and the shopkeeper was very apologetic and said that he would return whence it came. So let the buyer beware. The title "Bing Crosby - Everything I Have Is Yours". In fact the best thing about this disc was the photograph on the insert.

(Asst. Editor: A useful warning, Doug. Why people issue poor material on CD I'll never know. What a waste when there is so much good stuff waiting to appear on CD.)

Derek Parkes' Crosby Collectors Club

Time has been very much at a premium over the last few months and this has introduced some delay in club activities. Whereas a considerable effort may have been put into keeping your orders moving it is possible that something may have been overlooked. Please write if you have cause for worry . . . but please remember that the supply from manufacturers often leaves much to be desired. Happily, with the pound being stronger, imports from abroad have become cheaper and now is a good time to order. For example: the three CDs issued on MCA in the Bing's Hollywood series can be delivered to your home for not much more than £7 each . . . from America!

A small medical operation caused the loss of some time but a family holiday in Austria was most enjoyable and relaxing — especially as the chair lifts and cable cars were used to go UP the mountains! Of more interest to readers is the news of an unexpected visit to the States. Most of you will have heard of Eddie Rice — the collector who carefully transcribed around 500 Bing songs (Kraft Music Hall) from crumbling acetates bringing happiness to collectors everywhere. News was received that he had had a series of serious medical setbacks. Having been good friends for around 35 years there was no choice but to go to the States. Unbelievably this resulted in a most enjoyable visit. Eddie, from a speechless and paralysed condition had recovered sufficiently to present himself at Portland airport and then to act as a guide and chauffeur for a tour around the State of Oregon. Having found Eddie is relatively good shape, the tour was extended to meet many other collectors, to visit Pebble Beach where Bing held his Pro-Am Golf Tournament, on to Los Angeles and Hollywood where Bing has left his foot and palm prints in concrete and where there are three plaques in the pavements in recognition of his achievements in radio, film and records. Los Angeles Arboretum revealed the location where part of 'Road to Singapore' was filmed (the little hut by the water). Also visited was the Ambassador Auditorium where Bing fell off the stage and finally the Holy Cross Cemetery where he lies in rest. Of course, there were also visits to many other places of great interest but without a Bing connection. The warmth and friendliness of the American people will be long remembered.

It is very much regretted that it has not been possible to continue the listing of Bing CDs in this issue of Bing. However, the every act of hunting for those 'unknown' CDs has borne fruit and much of what was a rumour is now fact and, where the discs have materialised, they are listed as new releases in this article. Additionally, many discs have been found which feature an odd Bing track. These must be of limited appeal.

Reader's Digest — 'The Bing Crosby Years': Readers should note that the price for this set has been increased by £3 to £42.95 for the CD set and the offer of the free Glenn Miller CD has been discontinued. Instead buyers receive an assortment of 'foldaway' shopping bags or collapsible cassette storage boxes. How very much better it would be to keep the cost down and do away with these gifts. Presumably cassettes and LPs will also cost more.

Reader's Digest have released several sets in the States which contain a sprinkling of Bing tracks. It should be possible to look at these more closely in the next 'BING'.

Good Music Record Company: Some confusion has arisen relating to the 'Hawaiian Calls' LPs. The firm claims to have sent sets to people who have not received them. Others have received sets although, according to the Good Music Company, records were not despatched to them. This will be resolved and once the total cost is confirmed everyone will be charged the same amount even though the exchange rate has changed significantly. This means that the cost for all will be significantly lower than it would have been had the order gone through as originally planned.

Chesterfield Radio Shows: Assurance has been given that the next batch of 10 tapes will be ready before Christmas making the first 100 shows (Sep. 49 to Mar 52) available to all. The quality of these really is remarkable since the original exists, not as pressings, but as acetates which are now around 40 years old. The odd blemish is present but overall the sound is very, very good. Production costs have gone up and these with at least two postal increases since the series started have resulted in an increase in price. 20 shows on 10 cassettes now costs £30 or £3.50 per cassette. There is no surcharge for those who have already paid.

General Electric Shows: It is a long time since these shows were last mentioned. The transcription from acetates to tape has been progressing steadily and this material will be available when the Chesterfield series is completed.

LPs: Most record shops in America now carry no stocks of LPs and it seems almost certain that the position will be repeated here in the UK. However, two shops were found in Los Angeles which had a substantial number of Bing LPs in stock. These included the following labels: Joyce, Ajazz, Spokane, Totem, Broadway, Arcadia, Curtain Calls, Sandy Hook, Radioloa, etc. At the moment only the album titles and release numbers are available. Send 2 second class stamps if you would like a copy of the listing. Every effort will be made to obtain anyhting of interest to you. Now is a good time to buy with a strong pound. Obviously the cost will vary according to the label but think in terms around £7 each — delivered.

Turntables: Mention was made in the last issue of 'BING' of the Finial laser turntable which plays LPs without any stylus contact. The cost — then a staggering £21,000 — in less than six months has fallen to £10,500. Almost unbelievably SME have just released a completely new design, but a more conventional turntable that retails at about £9,000. Most high quality CD players are well under £1,000 with the cheapest player now dropping under the £100 mark.

CD Prices: Over the years CD prices have tended to fall. Bing discs were originally about £13 each but as more and more CDs were sold (they are now the most popular format) the price came down and a few CDs have retailed at about £2.50. In the last few months there is a suggestion that manufacturers are trying to force the price up again. This is possibly due to the introduction of expensive computer based equipment used to clean up ageing recordings — with varying degrees of success . . . plus the ever increasing cost of living. Imports, as already mentioned are now very much cheaper (with the exception of Japanese imports). American discs, including surface rates to the UK, are now comparable in price to the home product. However the Dollar/Pound exchange rate can change which affects the price of imports. Nevertheless, it seems a good idea to simplify the ordering procedure:

ORDERS

1) Please pay in full when the exact cost is known ('DCP' price)
2) If a 'DCP' price is not given or if there is some uncertainty then send £7 for each item ordered — double packs, etc. will of course count as 2, etc.

Please use a separate piece of paper for your order. A letter is not necessary. Include the following information:

1. Your name
2. Your address
3. Record type (LP, CD or cassette)
4. Record label and number
5. Name of album
6. Number of copies
7. Cash enclosed

N.B. Any order may require a cash adjustment.

Send your order to:

D. PARKES
66 FIRS ROAD
FIRSDOWN
SALISBURY, WILTS SP5 1SW
ENGLAND
Tel: WINTERSLOW 0980 862688

PLEASE NOTE:

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CONDITION CODE:

Please refer to 'BING' No. 93 (Dec. 1989) for full details.

NEW RELEASES? REISSUES OR PREVIOUS OMISSIONS

Very — CD **DOUBLE PLAY GRF016 EVERYTHING I HAVE IS YOURS** EEC £3 (£4 DCP)

Variable	Blacksmith Blues	When The Midnight Choo Choo Leaves For Alabam
- 5 to + 3	Come What May	
G to E	I Dreamt I Dwelt In Marble Hall	If I Had My Way
No echo	Glow Worm	Blues My Naughty Sweetie Gave To Me
	Feet Up	Down Yonder
	Pittsburgh Pennsylvania	Lady Of Spain
	Please Mr Sun	Zip A Dee Doo Dah
	Cockeyed Optimist	P.S. I Love You
	When The Red Roses Grow	If This Isn't Love
	Girl In The Bonnet Of Blue	Ole Buttermilk Sky
	Everything I Have Is Yours	Great Day
	A Thousand Violins	I Got The Sun In The Morning
	Dark Moon	It's A Good Day
	Now That I Need You	You Go To My Head
	Maybe It's Because	The Old Lamplighter
	Playing Time: 67 minutes	Tracks: 29

The cost of this CD must be taken with a pinch of salt since it was found in a market. Another copy turned up in a car boot sale! At the price shown it must be a bargain but not if you can tolerate your music only in pristine condtion. Most tracks are acceptable. The last ten tracks are available on Intertape 500027 CD. All the others can be found on the Nostalgia LP F22015, 'Lady In The Stamp Collection' being the only track from the LP not used here. Constant tone adjustment is essential.

??? — CD **MAGIC DAWE41 BING'S BUDDIES** UK ?£11

Theme	Row, Row, Row
Bright Eyes	A Kiss To Build A Dream On
Painting The Clouds With Sunshine (Martha Tilton)	Lo Hear The Gentle Lark (Anna Maria Alberghetti)

Sweet Violets w. Bob Hope
The Wang Wang Blues (T. Brewer)
Domino
I Only Have Eyes For You w. D. Shore
Swannee River (Dinah Shore)
Christopho Columbo
Because of You
Just One More Chance
Ole Buttermilk Sky (Hoagy Carmichael)
In The Cool, Cool, Cool Of The Evening (Jane Wyman)
The Twilight Side Of The Hill

Playing Time: 56 minutes
Tracks: 16 + 24 seconds of 'Theme'

This CD is not yet to hand but if the sound matches that of its stable mate, DAWE3 'Bing Crosby And Friends' then it should be a winner. The manufacturer, Submarine Records have invested in 'state of the art digital studio equipment' with which they hope to 'restore to good condition rare and historic recordings which otherwise would not be issued and consequently lost for all time'. Increased production costs have resulted in a higher price . . . the cost of a better sound.

The following two CDs feature tracks from the 'Bing and Louis' album but no complete CD issue has been found.

1E' Stereo & Mono — CD **CURB D2-77340 THE ALL-TIME BEST OF BING CROSBY** USA £6

Swinging On A Star
Sugar[1]
Dear Hearts And Gentle People
Accentuate The Positive[2]
Lazy River[1]
Where The Blue Of The Night (1940)
Don't Fence Me In[2]
Bye Bye Blues[1]
Easter Parade
Dardanella[1]

Notes: 1 — with Louis Armstrong — (stereo)
2 — with The Andrews Sisters

Playing time: 30 minutes
Tracks: 10

The Paradise Island Trio's version of 'Blue' may be of interest but the main interest here and with the next disc must be the tracks with Louis.

1E' Stereo — CD **CURB D2-77339 LOUIS ARMSTRONG GREATEST HITS** USA £6

What A Wonderful World
Way Down Yonder In New Orleans[1]
Blueberry Hill
Hello Dolly
Muskrat Ramble[1]
That Lucky Old Sun
At The Jazz Band Ball[1]
I Still Get Jealous
Brother Bill[1]
Rocky Mountain Moon[1]
The Preacher[1]

Note: 1 - Bing and Louis.

Playing Time: 31 minutes
Tracks: 11

Bing sings only on the six tracks indicated, Louis on all of the tracks. How nice it would have been to have the two Curb CDs combined to give a single 61 minute CD. Even then, "Little Ol' Tune' and 'Let's Sing Like A Dixieland Band' would be missing. There must be about one dozen different LP issues of the Bing and Louis material but not one contains all twelve of the original MGM masters. Contractually 'Lazy River' could not be used when the album was first released. Such a good recording was not to be wasted as it was used on the charity disc 'All Star Festival' in aid of the world's refugees. It has been freely used in more recent 'Bing and Louis' LPs but always one or more tracks have been missing.

ASV has been active of late in reissuing CDs of the 'Living Era' series previously available as LPs and cassettes.

-1E⁰ — CD **AJA 5043 HERE LIES LOVE** UK £7, (£8 DCP)

The Very Thought Of You
Love Thy Neighbour
June In January
You've Got Me Crying Again
May I?
With Every Breath I Take
Temptation
Let Me Call You Sweetheart
Sweet And Lovely
Love In Bloom
You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me
I Love You Truly
Someday Sweetheart
You're Beautiful Tonight My Dear
Love Is Just Around The Corner
Just A-Wearyin' For You
It Must Be True
Here Lies Love

Playing Time: 56 minutes
Tracks: 18

-1E⁰ — CD **AJA 5072 ON THE SENTIMENTAL SIDE** UK £7 (£8 DCP)

Black Moonlight
Our Big Love Scene
If You Should Ever Need Me
How Deep Is The Ocean
Stardust
Dancing In The Dark
I Found A Million Dollar Baby
You're A Sweet Little Headache
Sing A Song Of Sunbeams
The Funny Old Hills
On The Sentimental Side
Joobalai
That Sly Old Gentleman
Between A Kiss And A Sigh

I'm Through With Love — Thine Alone
My Heart Is Taking Lessons — I'm Building A Sailboat Of Dreams
I Have Eyes — Sweet Is The Word For You

Playing Time: 60 minutes — Tracks: 20

OE⁰ CD **AJA 5036 THE SONG IS . . . JEROME KERN** UK £7 (£8 DCP)
Make Believe — Remainder non-Bing

Playing Time: 50 minutes — Tracks 16

OE⁰ CD **AJA 5041 THE SONG IS . . . RICHARD RODGERS AND LORENZ HART** UK£7 (£8 DCP)
It's Easy To Remember — Remainder non-Bing

Playing Time: 47 minutes — Tracks: 16

OE CD **AJA 5044 THE SONG IS . . . COLE PORTER** UK £7 (£8 DCP)
Let's Do It w. Dorsey Bros. — Remainder non-Bing

Playing Time: 54 minutes — Tracks: 18

All the material on the last three CDs comes from the '20s and '30s. The music of each composer is performed by artists such as: Ambrose, Paul Whiteman, Lew Stone, Paul Robeson, Ipana Troubadours, Jessie Matthews, Savoy Orpheans, 'Hutch', Jack Hylton, Bix Beiderbecke, Frankie Trumbauer, Sam Coslow, Ethel Merman, Fred Astaire, etc.

OE⁰ CD **PRO-ARTE CDD 505 THE ORIGINAL DICK TRACY** USA £8
Some Surface noise — This programme was recorded 15 Feb 1945 in the Command Performance series for the Armed Forces Radio Service. It was made to entertain forces personnel who were on duty overseas. Based on a cartoon strip, the programme is somewhat chaotic and it is difficult to review it in the usual way. Tunes are frequently interrupted, the words are parodies and in many tracks Bing is heard talking but not singing. A sense of humour is essential to enjoy this disc. Bing sings:

Whose Dream Are You? — Who's That Knocking At My Door w. D. Shore
Whose Dream Are You? Reprise — All The Things You Are w. Hope and Sinatra

Playing Time: 72 minutes — Tracks: 18 locations on CD!

35, or more, stars are featured including: Jimmy Durante, Marlene Dietrich, Rita Hayworth, Ida Lupino, Ginger Rogers, Dick Powell, Lucille Ball, Johnny Mercer, Danny Kaye, Carmen Miranda, etc.

1E⁰ CD **PRO-ARTE CDD 486 BROTHER CAN YOU SPARE A DIME** USA £8
Brother Can You Spare A Dime — Just A Gigolo

Playing Time: 64 minutes — Tracks: 20

All tracks were recorded in the '30s by artists such as: Ben Selvin, Ruth Etting, Casa Loma Orch., Connie Boswell, Dick Powell, Fred Waring, Paul Robeson, Cliff Edwards, Paul Whiteman, Carroll Gibbons, Rudy Vallee, etc.

In the endeavour to complete the 'Comprehensive Listing of Company Discs That Feature Bing Crosby' the trail has led to many positive finds which now merit inclusion in this section. Disappointingly they come under the heading of 'guest appearances' and will be dealt with briefly. Many of the CDs were found in countries other than where they were released which means that the prices shown may be different and perhaps more advantageous to the home country.

OE⁰ CD **CONIFER CDHD 156 THE GREAT RADIO CROONERS** UK £6 (£7 DCP)
Maybe I'm Wrong Again — (listed as the B take)

Playing Time: 57 minutes — Tracks 18

This CD features many interesting vocalists of the 30s including Dick Powell, All Bowlly, Bob Crosby, Russ Columbo, Buddy Clark, Dick Todd, Perry Como, etc.

OE⁰ CD **CONIFER CDHD 171 WHEN DAY IS DONE — RECORDINGS 1924-1934** UK £6 (£7 DCP)
Some noise — CAS **MCHD 171**
High Water

Playing Time: 63 minutes — Tracks: 13

Paul Whiteman and his Concert Orchestra are featured throughout highlighting the great men of his orchestra: George Gershwin, Bix Beiderbecke, Hoagy Carmichael, Frank Trumbauer, etc.

-1E⁰ CD **SMS 22 ROMANTIC SONGS OF THE 30s** £5 in USA
I'm Falling In Love With Someone w. Frances Langford

Playing Time: 38 minutes — Tracks: 12

A mixture of British and American bands with their featured vocalists: Alan Breeze, Sam Browne, Alan Kane, Arthur Tracy, Kay Webber, Al Bowlly, Gracie Fields, etc.

OE² CD **RCA 9965-2-R THE GREAT AMERICAN VOCALISTS** USA ? £6
Wrap Up Your Troubles In Dreams

Playing Time: 59 minutes Tracks: 20

Whereas many of the smaller record companies are releasing out of copyright material (50 years old) which produces a cut off date of 1940 at the end of this year, RCA is here using its own material and the recordings span 1929-1970. Most of the early popular RCA artists are featured with the last four tracks coming more up to date with: Brook Benton, Dolly Parton, Elvis Presley and Willie Nelson. Is this the first time Bing and Elvis appear on the same record? It won't be the last!

2E¹ CD **RCA 9967-2-R THE GREAT VICTOR DUETS** USA ? £6
Stereo Fancy Meeting You Here Love Won't Let You Get Away
both with Rosemary Clooney
Playing Time: 64 minutes Tracks: 20

Most of the material is from the '50 and '60s but it does extend up to 1980 with Daryl Hall and John Oates. Once again we have Elvis here singing 'The Lady Loves Me' with Ann-Margret. Others include: Dinah Shore and Dean Martin, Perry Como and Betty Hutton, Harry Belafonte and Lena Horne, Howard Keel and Cogi Grant, Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy, Debbie Reynolds and Eddie Fisher, etc.

1E⁰ CD **RCA 9966-2-R THE HOLLYWOOD MEN** USA ? £6
Let A Smile Be Your Umbrella

Playing Time: 55 minutes Tracks: 20

1930-1967 but mainly '50s and '60s. Singers include: James Cagney, Mario Lanza, Bob Hope, Roy Rogers, Don Ameche, Harry Belafonte, Maurice Chevalier, Eddie Fisher, Fred Astaire, Frank Sinatra, Perry Como, Elvis Presley etc.

OE⁰ CD **DECCA MCAD-31345 JUDY GARLAND — THE BEST OF THE DECCA YEARS — Vol. 1 — HITS** USA £5
Yah-Ta-Ta, Yah-Ta-Ta (Talk, Talk, Talk) Bing and Judy

Playing Time: 40 minutes Tracks: 14

Bing and Judy took this song to No 5 in the Hit Parade. Judy also sings 'Friendship' with Johnny Mercer, 'For Me And My Gal' with Gene Kelly and 11 of her most popular solos recorded between 1937 and 1945.

OE⁰ CD **COLUMBIA CGK 40035 IRVING BERLIN: A HUNDRED YEARS** USA £8
Face The Music Medley (Soft Lights and Sweet Music)

Playing Time: 65 minutes approx Tracks: 21

This CD should also be available in the UK on the CBS label. It contains many other artists playing and singing Berlin's songs: Ben Selvin, Boswells, Eddie Cantor, Gene Austin, Ethel Waters, Fred Astaire, Bunny Berigan, Teddy Wilson, Red Norvo, Peggy Lee with Goodman, Dinah Shore, Rosemary Clooney etc.

OE¹ CD **MFP 6056 LOUIS ARMSTRONG THE GREAT ENTERTAINER** UK £6 (£7 DCP)
Gone Fishin'

Playing Time: 66 minutes Tracks: 20

A selection of the more popular tunes by Louis including 'Lazy Bones' with Gary Crosby.

-2E⁰ CD **DECCA MCAD-31346 LOUIS ARMSTRONG — THE BEST OF THE DECCA YEARS — Vol 1 — THE SINGER** USA £5
Gone Fishin'

Playing Time: 46 minutes Tracks: 13

The Mills Brothers join Louis in the 1937 version of 'In The Shade Of The Old Apple Tree' otherwise all the tracks were recorded around the '50s.

OE⁰ CD **DRG CDXP 2103 HOLLYWOOD'S GOLDEN ERA — ALL SINGING** USA £9
Stereo Up A Lazy River

Playing Time: 68 minutes Tracks: 24

Probably of interest because of the multitude of other stars including: Fred Astaire, Ava Gardner, Lena Horne, Susan Hayward, Kay Thompson, Esther Williams, Judy Garland, Debbie Reynolds, Jimmy Durante, Gene Kelly, Marilyn Monroe, etc.

OE¹ CD **ENTERTAINERS CD 0249 HOLLYWOOD PARTY** EEC ? £6
In The Cool, Cool, Cool Of The Evening with Jane Wyman

Playing Time: 71 minutes Tracks: 25

Those making merry include: Nat Cole, Doris Day, Frank Sinatra, Benny Goodman, Julie London, Fred Astaire, Harry James, Dean Martin, Peggy Lee, Harry Belafonte, Les Paul, Mary Ford, Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley (again!), etc.

News of the following releases has just arrived in time for Christmas:

OE⁰ CD **MCA MCAD-20521 BING CROSBY AND LIBERACE CHRISTMAS** USA £5

Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer	Silent Night
Here Comes Santa Claus	Adeste Fideles
The First Noel	God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
Playing Time: 27 minutes	Tracks: 10

What a strange combination. Liberace, without a word! plays the piano pleasantly at the conclusion of the Bing tracks.

-2E² CD **LASERLIGHT 15 152 IT'S CHRISTMAS TIME** USA £2.50 (Dep £4 DCP)

White Christmas	Adeste Fideles
Silver Bells w. Carol Richards	Silent Night
Playing Time: 45 minutes	Tracks: 17

Plus six tracks by Nat King Cole and seven by Frank Sinatra. The disc was made in Germany.

OE⁰ CD **CURB D2-77351 CHRISTMAS — ALL-TIME GREATEST RECORDS** USA £7

White Christmas	Jingle Bells w. The Andrew Sisters
Do You Hear What I Hear	
Playing Time: 33 minutes	Tracks: 12

Other artists are: Glen Campbell, Nat Cole, Lena Horne, Beach Boys, Lou Rawls, Ella Fitzgerald, Tennessee Ernie Ford, Merle Haggard and Dean Martin.

OE⁰ CD **RHINO R2 70637 BILLBOARD 1935-1954 GREATEST CHRISTMAS HITS** USA £7

White Christmas	Silent Night
Playing Time: Approx 28 minutes	Tracks: 10

Other artists: Vaughn Monroe, Gene Autry, Nat Cole, Spike Jones, Jimmy Boyd, Andrew Sisters with Guy Lombardo and Eartha Kitt.

OE⁰ CD **MCAD-22000/3 ALL TIME CHRISTMAS FAVORITES** USA £5 each
A set of 4 CDs out of which details are available for two of them:

Vol 2 MCAD-22001	Vol 4 MCAD-22003
I'll Be Home For Christmas	It's Beginning To Look Like Christmas
Santa Claus Is Coming To Town	Silver Bells
Playing Time: 36 minutes	Playing Time: 31 minutes

These are the usual Bing tracks. Other tracks by: Fred Waring, The Mills Brothers, Roger Williams, Jesse Crawford, Liberace, Pat Boone, Andrews Sisters, Brenda Lee etc.

Finally, here are a few discs you may care to hunt out. Full details are not yet to hand. Hopefully all will be available through our club by the time you read this.

CD **PRO-ARTE FANFARE CDM-844 CHRISTMAS LEGENDS** USA £5
Silent Night ? Others

CD **SANDY HOOK SH2095 BLUE SKIES SOUNDTRACK** USA £7

Almost certainly the songs on this CD have been taken from the Paramount publicity disc D-6481/2 in which case this CD is unreservedly recommended. Sandy Hook may have previously issued an LP of this material. It was issued on Soundtrak STK-104. The songs must be known to almost everyone and so, not having the disc, they are not listed here. Original artists, as in the film, will be featured so Bing should be very prominently represented.

CD **SANDY HOOK SH2045 STAR SPANGLED RHYTHM** USA £5

Previously issued on Curtain Calls 100/20 LP and in 1981 Sandy Hook issued the LP using the same number as shown above. 'Paramount issued 'Star Spangled Rhythm' in 1942 and what it lacked in plot it made up for with a tuneful score (by Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer) and appearances by not only every star on the back lot, but nearly every featured player as well.' Bing sings 'Old Glory'.

Several weeks ago a very interesting 'phone call was received with the news that 'Le Bing' was to be released in Europe. The caller promised to send more details, hopefully with the label and release number and an address. Unfortunately no letter was ever received. The excitement of the trip to America has intervened and the name of the caller is now gone — probably lost in a mass (?mess) of decaying grey matter! Will that person, or anyone else with details, please make contact (Tel 0980 862688). Thank you.

BING CROSBY — A COMPREHENSIVE DISCOGRAPHY, RADIO PROGRAM LIST AND FILMOGRAPHY

By special arrangement with the publishers this book is now available to all at 40% or 50% below the normal retail price — the size of the discount will depend on the total numbr ordered. It follows that if you are interested you must order now as this offer in unlikely to be repeated. Now is a particularly good time to order as the strong pound makes the deal even more attractive, giving everyone the opportunity to buy an expensive import at a more reasonable price.

The total cost has to include the bulk postage from the States plus local postage which will probably amount to about £4 for a heavy book (554 pages). At the current rate of exchange the book will cost from £13 to £10 plus postage. Christmas is a bad time to pay out extra money. If you can please send a deposit of £15 otherwise £5. Payment will be adjusted once the true cost is known.

The book consists of three main parts:

1. A 78rpm discography which includes a substantial listing of issue numbers.
2. Details of radio programmes including song titles where known
3. A filmography which is reasonable but which cannot be compared to Fred Reynold's book 'The Road To Hollywood'.

Part 2 in invaluable to anyone collecting the Philco, Chesterfield or GE shows.

If you want this book at the discount price you must order **NOW**.

Finally an LP picture disc of High Society has appeared but at this writing it is impossible to give fuller details.

Happy Hunting
Derek Parkes

P.S. With this article folded and ready for despatch to your editor along comes the news of two more CD releases.

1. 'White Christmas' on Japanese MCA 32XD-511 14 Tracks £16.99 in UK
2. 'Holiday Inn/Blue Skies' on Vintage Jazz Classics VJC 1012-2 USA £10 in UK.

The former is a recompiled version of the USA disc 'Merry Christmas', MCAD-31143. At this writing the additional two tracks remain a mystery — surely not the two Irish numbers that appeared on the Lotus 'White Christmas'.

The second item contains 77 tracks — a total time of 76 minutes. Although I still don't have this disc, I understand that it contains a mixture of Paramount Publicity Discs (air trailers) and the Paramount recordings made for insertion into the films. As such, there is material here that never appeared in the film of 'Blue Skies' such as 'I'm Putting All My Eggs In One Basket", 'Say It Isn't So' and 'God Bless America'.

Is there to be a UK Christmas release?

Derek

Bing Crosby Story to be Filmed?

Connick: May play Bing

Filmland wild about Harry

AMERICAN singing sensation Harry Connick Jr is being tipped to play Bing Crosby in a major Hollywood movie about the late star. The 22-year-old composer-entertainer, who has been called the new Sinatra, made his film debut recently in the war movie Memphis Belle. Now bosses at 20th Century Fox are said to be considering him for the lead rôle in the upcoming Bing Crosby Story.

Is Bing's life finally to be the feature of a Hollywood movie? The cutting from the "Daily Mail" suggests so. A repeat of the "Jolson Story" perhaps. We doubt it — for the store current box office appeal, the dagger in the back "Mommie Dearest" story of Joan Crawford is probably the likely role model. We shall see.

CROSBY CLUBS AROUND THE WORLD

The ICC is pleased to be associated with the following Crosby Clubs.

Please write to the appropriate address for details of membership

Club Crosby, "BINGANG"
Mark Scrimger, President
Wayne L. Martin, Editor
P.O. Box 3849
Kirkwood
Missouri 63122

Members in Europe should enrol via.Ken Crossland)

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